TERROR

NO. 8
ALL-NEW!

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT®

1 of 2
COVERS

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*AN ALL-NEW STORY BY*
**JOE R. LANSDALE & JOHN L. LANSDALE**
*CHAMPION MOJO STORYTELLERS!*

FEATURING...

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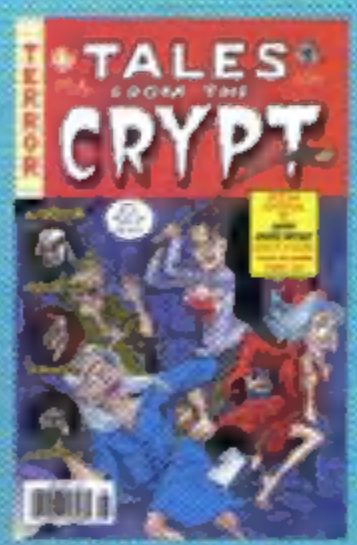
COVER A




COVER B

# PAPERCUTZ™

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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT®

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO WILLIAM M. GAINES, AL FELDSTEIN, REED CRANDALL, JOHNNY CRAIG, JACK DAVIS, WILL ELDER, GEORGE EVANS, GRAHAM INGELS, JACK KAMEN, BERNIE KRIGSTEIN, HARVEY KURTZMAN, JOE ORLANDO, GEORGE ROUSSOS, MARIE SEVERIN, AL WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

THE CRYPT-KEEPER

"SHE WHO WOULD RULE THE WORLD"

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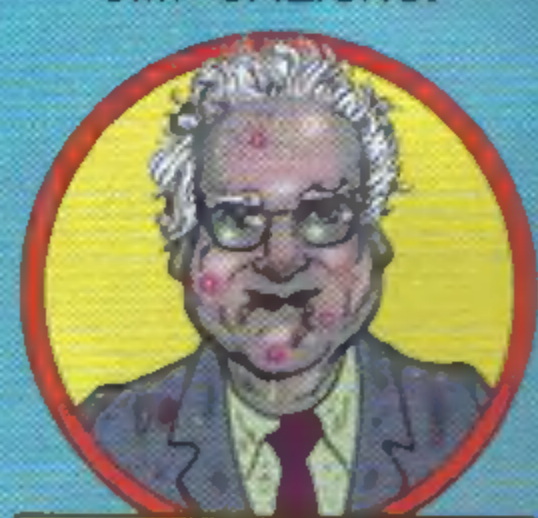

THE OLD EDITOR

Caricatures by Rick Parker.

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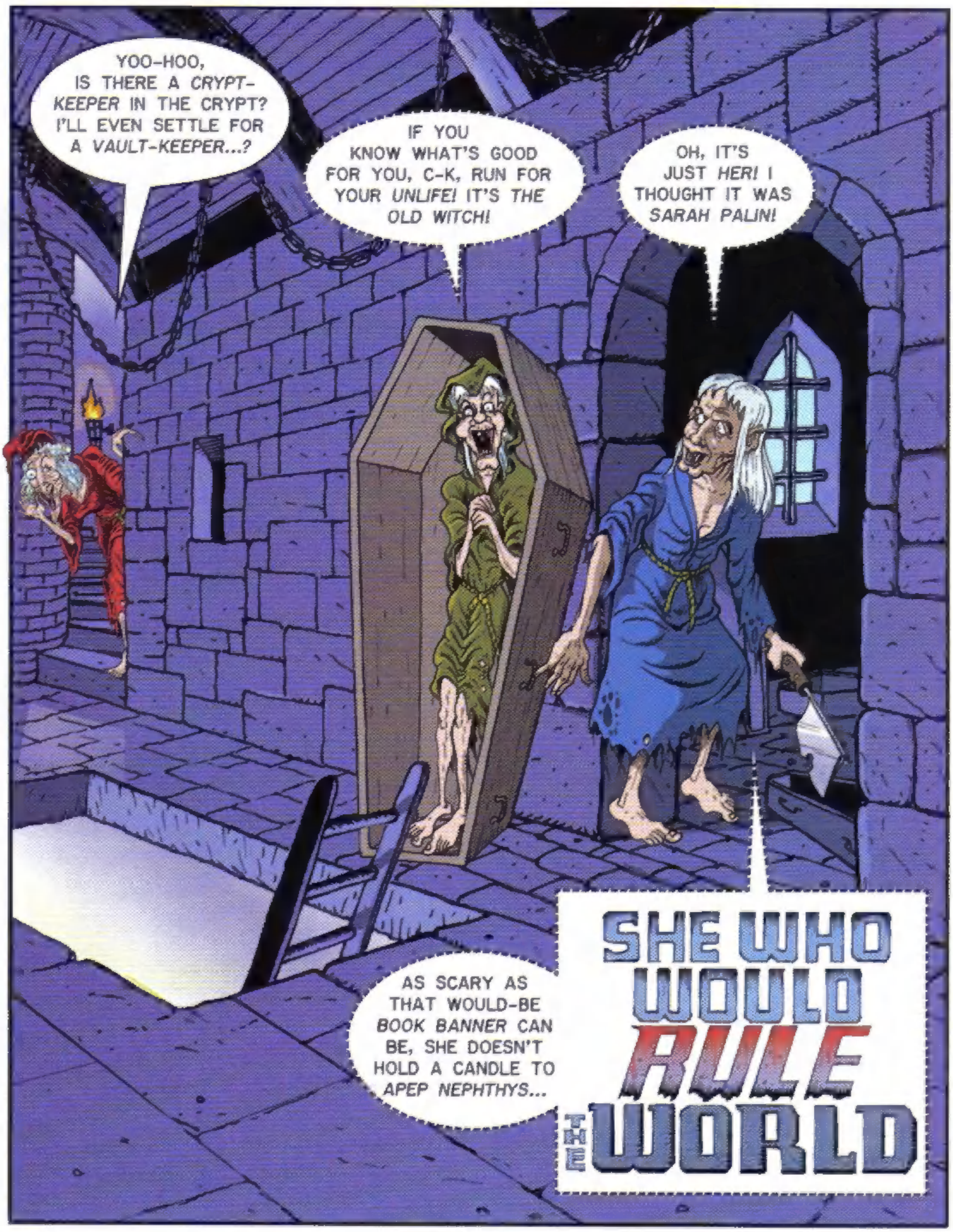
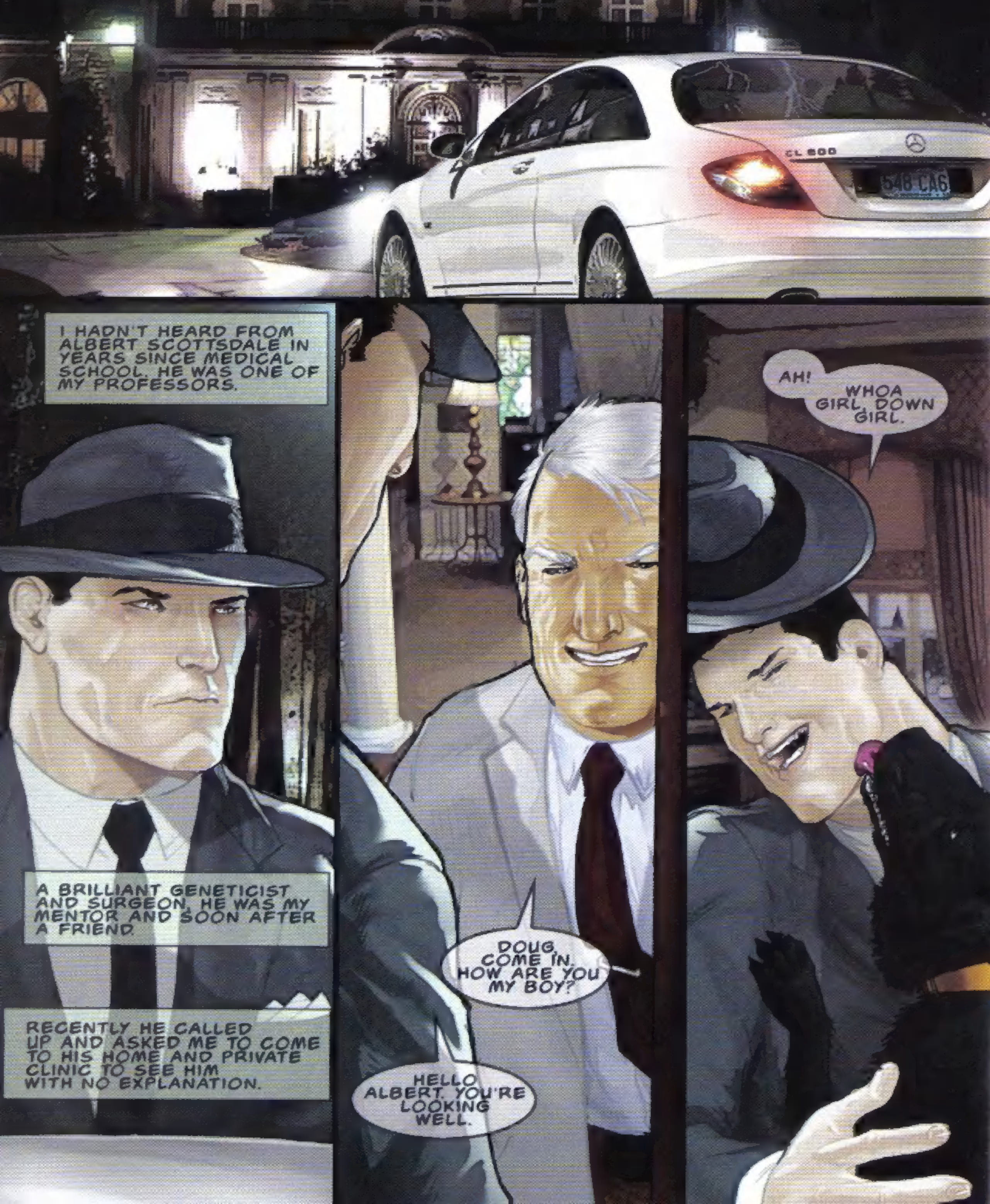
# THE CRYPT OF TERROR




## SHE WHO WOULD RULE THE WORLD

MY NAME IS DOUG. DR. DOUGLAS CHANDLER, AND I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU A STORY ABOUT SOMETHING SO EVIL, YET SO BEAUTIFUL, THAT YOU WILL NEVER FORGET IT FOR THE REST OF YOUR DAYS.

IT HAUNTS ME TO THIS VERY DAY... I LIVED IT.



WAIT A MIN...

HER HIP, HER LEG, THEY'RE WORKING.

ALBERT HOW CAN THAT BE?

THAT'S WHY I CALLED YOU HERE.

I'VE FOUND A WAY TO ALLOW A LIVING CREATURE TO ADAPT, TO AUTOMATICALLY CHANGE AT A GENETIC LEVEL TO ADAPT TO ANY PHYSICAL DAMAGE, INJURY OR DISEASE.

BUT HOW?

HE LED ME TO HIS LAB BENCH AND BEGAN TO EXPLAIN IN DETAIL HIS DISCOVERY AND EXPERIMENTS. I WILL NOT REITERATE IT FOR I DARE NOT SHARE THIS WITH OTHERS AND ALLOW IT TO BE REPEATED AS YOU WILL SEE WHY LATER IN MY STORY.

IN THE END I WAS SHOCKED AT HIS DISCOVERY, BUT NOT AS SHOCKED AS I WAS WHEN HE TOLD ME WHAT HE WANTED TO DO NEXT.

GOOD LORD, ALBERT, THIS IS INCREDIBLE.

I CALLED YOU HERE IN HOPE YOU WOULD HELP ME WITH THE NEXT STEP IN MY EXPERIMENT.

WHAT'S THAT?

A HUMAN SUBJECT.

WHAT?!

WHAT?! ARE YOU MAD?!

CALM YOURSELF DOUG. I HAVE PLANNED AND THOUGHT IT THROUGH.

NOT ENOUGH OBVIOUSLY. YOU VERY WELL KNOW THIS IS NOT ETHICAL NOT TO MENTION ILLEGAL.

NOT IF SHE CONSENTS.

SHE? MY GOD ALBERT. YOU MEAN YOU HAVE SOMEONE IN MIND?

YES. IN THE NEXT ROOM IN MY PRIVATE SURGERY.

MY GOD ALBERT!

WITH MY HEART RACING TO BURST OUT OF MY CHEST I RAN INTO THE SURGERY ROOM AND TO MY UTTER ASTONISHMENT, THERE A WOMAN LAY.

SHE MAY HAVE BEEN BEAUTIFUL ONCE BUT NOW NEARLY A CORPSE. PATCHES OF HAIR MISSING, SKINNY AS A SKELETON, HER SKIN A SHRIVELED MESS AS MUSCLE LOSS IS EVIDENT. SHE WAS WITHERING AWAY.

AIDS?

FINAL STAGES. SHE WAS A TRANSIENT, WALKED INTO MY MEDICAL OFFICE AND COLLAPSED. ALL SHE WAS ABLE TO TELL ME WAS HER NAME, APEP NEPHTHYS. ODD NAME, ISN'T IT? SHE WILL NOT LAST THE NIGHT.

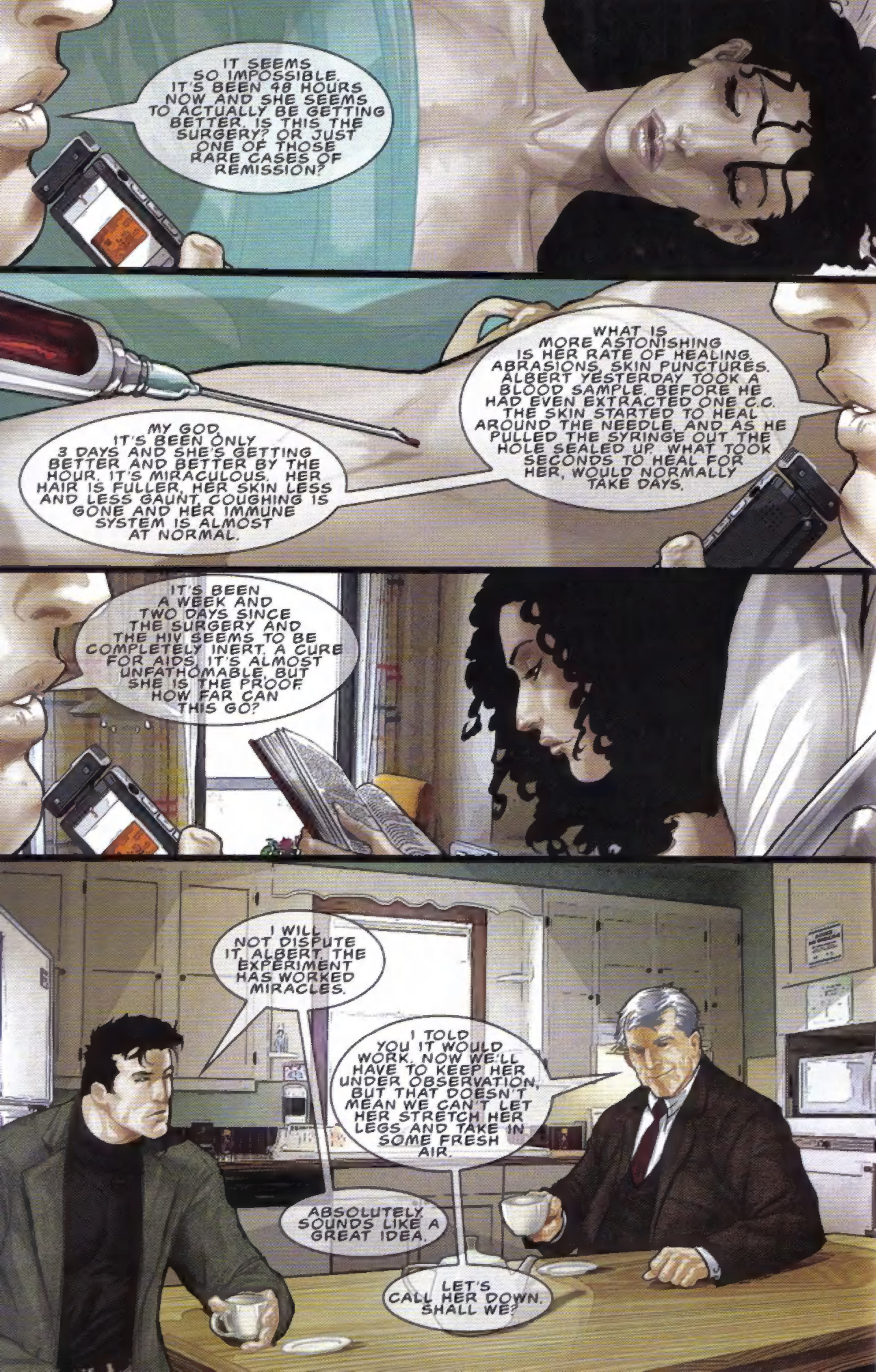
MY GOD THIS IS GHASTLY.

SHE IS DYING. WE WILL BE SAVING HER LIFE. YOU WISH TO LET HER DIE IF YOU CAN HELP IT? IS THAT ETHICAL?

I SUPPOSE NOT. OKAY, I WILL ASSIST YOU. BUT WE NEED HER WRITTEN CONSENT.

I HAVE EVERYTHING PREPARED.

MISS NEPHTHYS, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MY FRIEND AND ONE OF THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST YOUNG DOCTORS TODAY.
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE TRYING TO... HOOK ME UP...UGH... A LITTLE LATE, DON'T YOU THINK D.DOC.
MISS NEPHTHYS, I...
HELL... HEY HAND-SOME...
HUH.. WHAT'S THAT MISS NEPHTHYS?
UNGHH.. DON'T BE SO BASHFUL. YOU ARE VERY HANDSOME.
MISS NEPHTHYS ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE FULLY AWARE OF WHAT DR SCOTTS-DALE IS ASKING OF YOU?
WH..WHA... WHAT ARE MY THE...UHN... ODDS?
ODDS? WELL, YOU MAY NOT SURVIVE THE NIGHT. IF IT FAILS, NOTHING CHANGES, BUT IF IT WORKS...
YOU SURE KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO CHARM A GIRL.
I'M ALL YOURS, HAND-SOME.
WH... WHERE DO I SIGN... UP?
THE SURGERY TOOK 7 HOURS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW ALBERT CAME UP WITH HIS PROCEDURE. IT WAS FRIGHTENING IN ITS GENIUS. I JUST HOPED ALBERT WASN'T OUR MODERN-AGED-FRANKENSTEIN.
FOR APEP WAS TOO BEAUTIFUL TO BE A MONSTER.
OR SO I THOUGHT.


IT SEEMS SO IMPOSSIBLE. IT'S BEEN 48 HOURS NOW AND SHE SEEMS TO ACTUALLY BE GETTING BETTER. IS THIS THE SURGERY? OR JUST ONE OF THOSE RARE CASES OF REMISSION?
MY GOD. IT'S BEEN ONLY 3 DAYS AND SHE'S GETTING BETTER AND BETTER BY THE HOUR. IT'S MIRACULOUS. HER HAIR IS FULLER, HER SKIN LESS AND LESS GAUNT. COUGHING IS GONE AND HER IMMUNE SYSTEM IS ALMOST AT NORMAL.
WHAT IS MORE ASTONISHING IS HER RATE OF HEALING. ABRASIONS, SKIN PUNCTURES. ALBERT YESTERDAY TOOK A BLOOD SAMPLE. BEFORE HE HAD EVEN EXTRACTED ONE C.C. THE SKIN STARTED TO HEAL AROUND THE NEEDLE, AND AS HE PULLED THE SYRINGE OUT THE HOLE SEALED UP. WHAT TOOK SECONDS TO HEAL FOR HER, WOULD NORMALLY TAKE DAYS.
IT'S BEEN A WEEK AND TWO DAYS SINCE THE SURGERY AND THE HIV SEEMS TO BE COMPLETELY INERT. A CURE FOR AIDS. IT'S ALMOST UNFATHOMABLE, BUT SHE IS THE PROOF. HOW FAR CAN THIS GO?
I WILL NOT DISPUTE IT, ALBERT. THE EXPERIMENT HAS WORKED MIRACLES.
I TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK. NOW WE'LL HAVE TO KEEP HER UNDER OBSERVATION, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T LET HER STRETCH HER LEGS AND TAKE IN SOME FRESH AIR.
ABSOLUTELY. SOUNDS LIKE A GREAT IDEA.
LET'S CALL HER DOWN. SHALL WE?

I'M ALREADY PRESENT, DOCTOR.

AH MISS NEPHTHYS, NICE TO SEE YOU UP AND ABOUT.

I FEEL EXCELLENT. THANK YOU.

OH HELLO, HANDSOME..

HELLO, APEP.

I HAVE SOME PLEASANT NEWS. DOUG HERE IS GOING TO TAKE YOU FOR A WALK IN THE PARK.

OH?

YES, DOUG IS DROPPING ME OFF AT THE HOSPITAL NEARBY AND YOU CAN TAG ALONG. SOUND GOOD, MY DEAR?

ABSOLUTELY.

OKAY YOU TWO; THE PARK IS ACROSS THE STREET.

APEP, YOU JUST GO AHEAD. I'D LIKE TO TALK TO DOUG A MOMENT. IF YOU FEEL TIRED AT ALL THERE ARE NICE BENCHES THERE FOR YOU TO SIT AND REST.

GLADLY.

APEP MENTIONED HAVING NO FAMILY OR FRIENDS SO I AM GOING TO CONTINUE TO LET HER STAY AT THE HOUSE FOR A TIME.

THAT'S A FINE IDEA.

"WE CAN OBSERVE THE FURTHER EFFECTS OF THE PROCEDURE."
"I CAN PAY HER ROOM AND BOARD AS WELL AS SAY 250 A WEEK, SO IT GIVES HER THE OPPORTUNITY TO START HER NEW LIFE ON A POSITIVE NOTE."
"YOU'RE RIGHT, ALBERT, SHE DESERVES IT AFTER THE ORDEAL SHE HAS GONE THROUGH AND IT WILL HELP HER FEEL BETTER ABOUT BEING OUR LITTLE GUINEA PIG."
"OKAY, AGREED. SPEAK TO HER ABOUT IT AS YOU TWO WALK THE PARK. AND I'M SURE SHE'LL ACCEPT."
"GO ON, CATCH UP WITH HER BEFORE SHE GETS HERSELF INTO TROUBLE ON HER FIRST DAY OUT."

BLAM
BLAM
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!
IT CAME FROM THE THE PARK.
OH, NO, APEP!
OH, MY GOD, APEP!
YOU KNOW THIS WOMAN?
YES, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
PLENTY. YOUR GIRLFRIEND HERE TOOK MY GUN OUT OF MY HOLSTER AND SHOT A YOUNG WOMAN TO DEATH. MORE MAY HAVE BEEN HURT OR KILLED IF I HADN'T STOPPED HER.
THERE MUST BE A MISTAKE.
YES, HERS. PRE-MEDITATED MURDER. COME ON, SISTER, YOU'RE GOING DOWNTOWN.
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SO SHE JUST TOOK OFFICER O'ROURKE'S GUN AND...

...SHOT A WOMAN DOWN.

ACCORDING TO WITNESSES, SHE PULLED THE GUN OUT OF ITS HOLSTER, WALKED RIGHT UP TO THE GIRL, AND SHOT HER IN THE HEAD. TWICE.

WE HAVE THE WITNESSES READY TO IDENTIFY HER ALONG WITH O'ROURKE HERE AS SOON AS HER APPOINTED DEFENDER ARRIVES.

OH, MY LORD!

WHAT IS IT, O'ROURKE?

THAT'S NOT HER!

OFFICER, THIS NO TIME FOR JOKES.

SIR, IM TELLING YOU, THAT IS NOT THE WOMAN I ARRESTED.

I'LL GET THE DOOR, ALBERT.
EXCUSE ME? CAN I HELP YOU?
DO I KNOW Y...??
COME NOW, HANDSOME, IS THAT A WAY TO GREET A FRIEND?
APER, BUT HOW...WHAT WAS..?
AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE ME?
YES, YES OF COURSE BUT... HOW DID YOU?
I ADAPTED, HANDSOME. ISN'T THAT WHAT THE EXPERIMENT WAS ABOUT?
THEY LET YOU GO?
YES, THEY HAD THE WRONG WOMAN, OR SO THEY THOUGHT.

MY GOD, YOU MEAN YOU DID MURDER THAT WOMAN?!

MURDER!?

YOU CALL IT MURDER? DO YOU CALL A TIGRESS KILLING AN ELK, MURDER? DO YOU CALL A FALCON KILLING A RODENT MURDER?

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

WHAT I'M SAYING, HANDSOME, IS THAT IT'S THE ORDER OF THE SPECIES. SHE WAS AS BEAUTIFUL AS I AND I DIDN'T LIKE IT. SHE WAS WEAK, I WAS STRONG, I WAS THE VICTOR. SHE WAS MY INFERIOR.

SO, YOU ARE SUPERIOR THEN?

YOU SHOULD KNOW, HANDSOME, YOU HELPED MAKE ME WHAT I AM NOW.

APEP HOW CAN YOU...?

SILENCE. I DO NOT WISH TO SPEAK OF IT ANYMORE. I'M TIRED AND I'M GOING TO APPROPRIATE DR. SCOTTSDALE'S BEDROOM.

I WATCHED HER WALK UP THE STAIRS AND THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW HER BEFORE SHE DISAPPEARED.

THE NEXT MORNING SHE WAS GONE.

WE READ ABOUT HER EXPLOITS IN THE NEWS, AND FOUR YEARS LATER, WE SAW HER ON TELEVISION.

BEHIND ME IS THE WHITE HOUSE, WHERE NEWLY APPOINTED SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY, FORMER US ATTORNEY GENERAL NICK PENNINGTON IS IN CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT.

HERE WE SEE NICK PENNINGTON HIMSELF WITH HIS LOVELY FIANCE, APEP NEPHTHYS, OUTSIDE A BENEFIT GALA HELD LAST WEEK. AS YOU ALREADY KNOW PENNINGTON WAS APPOINTED AFTER THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF HIS PREDECESSOR.

SHE'S BEEN MARRIED THREE TIMES IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, TWO HUSBANDS MYSTERIOUSLY DIE AND ONE COMMITTED TO AN INSTITUTION, ALL LEAVING THEIR FORTUNES TO HER.

MOST DEFINITELY NOT A COINCIDENCE.

AMASSING THIS GREAT WEALTH, BUT TO WHAT END?

WITH HER NEW INVOLVEMENT WITH THIS NICK PENNINGTON PERSON, OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING THAT MAY THREATEN THE FREE WORLD.

IT'S JUST HARD TO THINK THAT I...

DON'T BLAME YOURSELF. YOU HAD NO IDEA THIS WOULD HAPPEN. IT'S ALMOST TOO UNBELI...

I'LL GO GET THE DOOR.

APEP!

HELLO HANDSOME, CAN I COME IN?

OF COURSE, COME IN.

DID YOU MISS ME?

YOU KNOW I HAVE. I...

...WHAT ABOUT YOUR FIANCE?

NICK? WE'RE GOING FOR A CONFERENCE IN IRAQ TO MEET WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. MORE TALK ON THE NEW DEMOCRACY.

FUNNY WORD IN A WORLD LIKE THIS, ISN'T IT? PEACE IS NOT IN HUMAN NATURE. I WENT ON AHEAD, HE WILL CALL FOR ME HERE IN THE MORNING.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT. ARE YOU IN LOVE WITH HIM? DID YOU EVEN FEEL FOR ANY OF THE OTHERS?

BEFORE YOU DESTOYED THEM?

IF I WANTED LOVE I WOULD COME TO YOU, HANDSOME. DON'T LOOK SO BASHFUL. HOW COULD I NOT NOTICE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME?

THEN WHAT IS IT? THE MONEY?

MONEY?

WHAT'S A GODDESS NEED WITH MONEY?

GODDESS? IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE?

THAT'S WHAT YOU MADE ME. I'M THE MOST POWERFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD THANKS TO YOU AND DR SCOTTSDALE. I NOW DICTATE LIFE AND DEATH. I HAVE POWERS BEYOND NORMAL MAN. IS THAT NOT WHAT MAKES A GODDESS?

NICK PENNINGTON. HE IS SUPPOSED TO BE SOMEONE SO IMPORTANT. IN CHARGE OF KEEPING AMERICA SAFE. BUT TO ME HE IS ONLY A PUPPET AND I PULL THE STRINGS. WITH HIM I'LL HOLD THE FATE OF THE WORLD IN MY HANDS.

IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE AFTER? THE WORLD?

IS IT NOT WHAT A GODDESS IS MEANT FOR? THE WORLD WILL BOW DOWN TO ME. WILL YOU RULE AT MY SIDE, HANDSOME?

APEP, YOU'RE EVIL.

EVIL? TOO BAD YOU HADN'T REALIZED THAT WHEN YOU DECIDED TO HELP DR. SCOTTSDALE. APEP, IN MY NATIVE LANGUAGE, IS THE VERY PERSONIFICATION OF EVIL. MY MOTHER KNEW IT THE DAY HER EYES FIRST MET MINE. SHE NAMED ME AT THAT VERY MOMENT WHEN SHE WHISPERED THE WORD APEP.

ANYWAY, NICK WILL COME FOR ME IN THE MORNING. I NEED TO REST UNTIL THEN. I'M GOING TO DR. SCOTTSDALE'S ROOM FOR THE NIGHT. MY OFFER STILL STANDS, HANDSOME.

SHE IS ABSOLUTELY EVIL, ALBERT. YOU KNOW WHAT SHE'S PLANNING TO DO?
YES I OVER-HEARD.
WE HAVE TO STOP HER. WE CAN TALK TO THIS PENNING-TON FELLOW.
AND SAY WHAT? YOU KNOW WHAT COMES OVER YOU WHEN SHE IS AROUND YOU. YOU KNOW WHAT SHE IS. SHE HAS VERY STRONG SEDUCTIVE POWERS. NO WAY WOULD HE EVEN LISTEN TO US.
THEN REVERSE-SURGERY IS THE ONLY WAY. BUT HOW? SHE IS PROBABLY IMMUNE TO ANY FORM OF ANESTHESIA.
MAYBE ONLY IN HUMAN DOSES. I HAVE A BOTTLE OF CHLOROFORM IN STORAGE. IN SMALL DOSES IT'LL PUT SOMEONE TO SLEEP, BUT A HIGH DOSE WILL KILL. IF WE USE A LETHAL DOSE IT MAY TAX HER ADAPTIVE POWERS TO THE POINT OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS, HOPEFULLY GIVING US SOME TIME TO OPERATE.
IT'S WORTH A TRY. I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M SAYING THIS, BUT WE CAN'T LET HER LEAVE ALIVE.
THE FATE OF THE FREE WORLD IS AT STAKE.
OKAY, NOW PUT IT OVER HER FACE. I'LL HELP HOLD HER DOWN.
AT THAT DOSAGE, IT SHOULD ONLY TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO TAKE EFFECT.

MMMGH...

TIGHTLY, DAMN IT, TIGHTLY!
UNGH. I'M TRYING, ALBERT!

MY GOD! SHE'S GETTING... ENGH...STRONGER! HER STRENGTH...UNGH...IS ADAPTING TO M...MATCH MINE! I CAN'T HOLD IT MUCH LONGER!

ENGAGED

YOU FOOLS!

YOU THINK YOU CAN KNOCK ME UNCONSCIOUS!?!

WAIT, YOU WERE GOING TO OPERATE ON ME.

I SHOULD KILL YOU BOTH WHERE YOU STAND!

BUT I WILL NOT LOWER MYSELF TO YOUR PATHETIC LEVEL.

IS THIS WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, DOCTOR?

WAS THIS PLAN 'B'?

WERE YOU GOING TO SLIT MY THROAT WITH IT?

WELL LOOK.

WATCH HOW YOUR FUTILE ATTEMPT WOULD HAVE FAILED.

THERE! YOU SEE!?!

NOW GET OUT! LEAVE ME TO MY SLUMBER. NICK WILL BE CALLING FOR ME IN THE MORNING.

MY GOD, DOUG. DID YOU SEE HER EYES? SHE IS NO LONGER HUMAN. SHE IS BEYOND OUR STOPPING HER. SHE IS INVINCIBLE. WILL NOTHING STOP HER??

CARBON DIOXIDE.

OF COURSE. YES, A ROOM FILLED WITH THE GAS WOULD BE FATAL TO ANY AVERAGE PERSON AND WE NEED NOT MAKE CONTACT WITH HER TO ADMINISTER IT.

WILL IT WORK?

WE FILL THE BEDROOM WITH IT AND IT'LL HOPEFULLY CHOKE HER INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS. HER ADAPTIVE ABILITIES WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM.

IT IS OUR LAST OPTION. IF IT DOESN'T WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ANY LONGER. SHE'LL SURELY KILL US THIS TIME.

I HAVE A COLLEAGUE WHO CAN SUPPLY US TWO TANKS. I'LL HAVE IT SENT TO US IMMEDIATELY.

OKAY: THE DOOR CRACK AND THE VENTS INSIDE ARE SEALED...

...AND WITH CAULKING AROUND THE OUTSIDE OF THE WINDOW...

...THE ROOM'S AS AIRTIGHT AS IT'S GOING TO GET.

ANY MOMENT NOW, DOUG, THE GAS SHOULD BE FILLING THE ROOM AND SOON START TAKING EFFECT ON APEP.

THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH CONCENTRATION OF CARBON DIOXIDE INSIDE BY NOW WHERE THE AVERAGE PERSON WOULD SURELY BE DEAD.

CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING YET.

WAIT, SHE'S STARTING TO COUGH.

SHE IS COUGHING HEAVILY NOW. I CAN HEAR HER STRUGGLING TO GET OUT OF BED. I CAN HEAR THE LAMP AND CLOCK FALL TO THE FLOOR.

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS AS SHE STRUGGLES TO STAY UPRIGHT. AS SHE COMES CLOSER TO THE DOOR.

THUMP

GOOD LORD, SHE'S AT THE DOOR. IS THERE NO STOPPING HER?

THUMP

DOUG, PLEASE. DON'T KILL ME. KOFF

PLEASE, I'M NOT KOFF REALLY EVIL, JUST A CONFUSED KOFF CHILD KOFF KOFF

I...

DO NOT LISTEN TO HER, DOUG. FIGHT OFF HER INFLUENCE.

DOUG KOFF I LOVE YOU PLEASE. KOFF

KOFF IF YOU LOVE ME, KOFF PLEASE SAVE ME KOFF KOFF

NO!!! I WON'T LISTEN!

INGRATES!

YOU PATHETIC HUMANS. YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH.
I CAN CRUSH YOU ALL LIKE ANTS. I PROMISED YOU THE WORLD, HANDSOME...
AND THIS IS...HOW... YOU...R..RE... PA...
DOUG, QUICK! WE HAVE TO SHUT OFF THE CARBON DIOXIDE BEFORE IT OVER-TAKES US AS WELL.
THERE, IT'S OFF. IT'S OVER NOW.
NO, NOT UNTIL WE OPERATE.

THIS IS HOW THE STORY ENDS.

WE WERE ABLE TO DO THE PROCEDURE WITHOUT INCIDENT.

SHE REVERTED BACK TO HER ORIGINAL STATE. THE AIDS HAD COMPLETELY OVER-COME HER.

IT WAS FOR THE BETTER. WE DID SAVE MANKIND.

THEN WHY DID I FEEL SO BAD?

WELL, SHE WAS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING.

I WAS IN LOVE WITH HER. AND MAYBE IN HER OWN TWISTED WAY SHE LOVED ME.

NICK CALLING

I ALMOST TOOK HER UP ON HER OFFER TO RULE BY HER SIDE

IT WOULDN'T HAVE WORKED OUT ANYWAY..

AFTER ALL, I AM ONLY HUMAN.

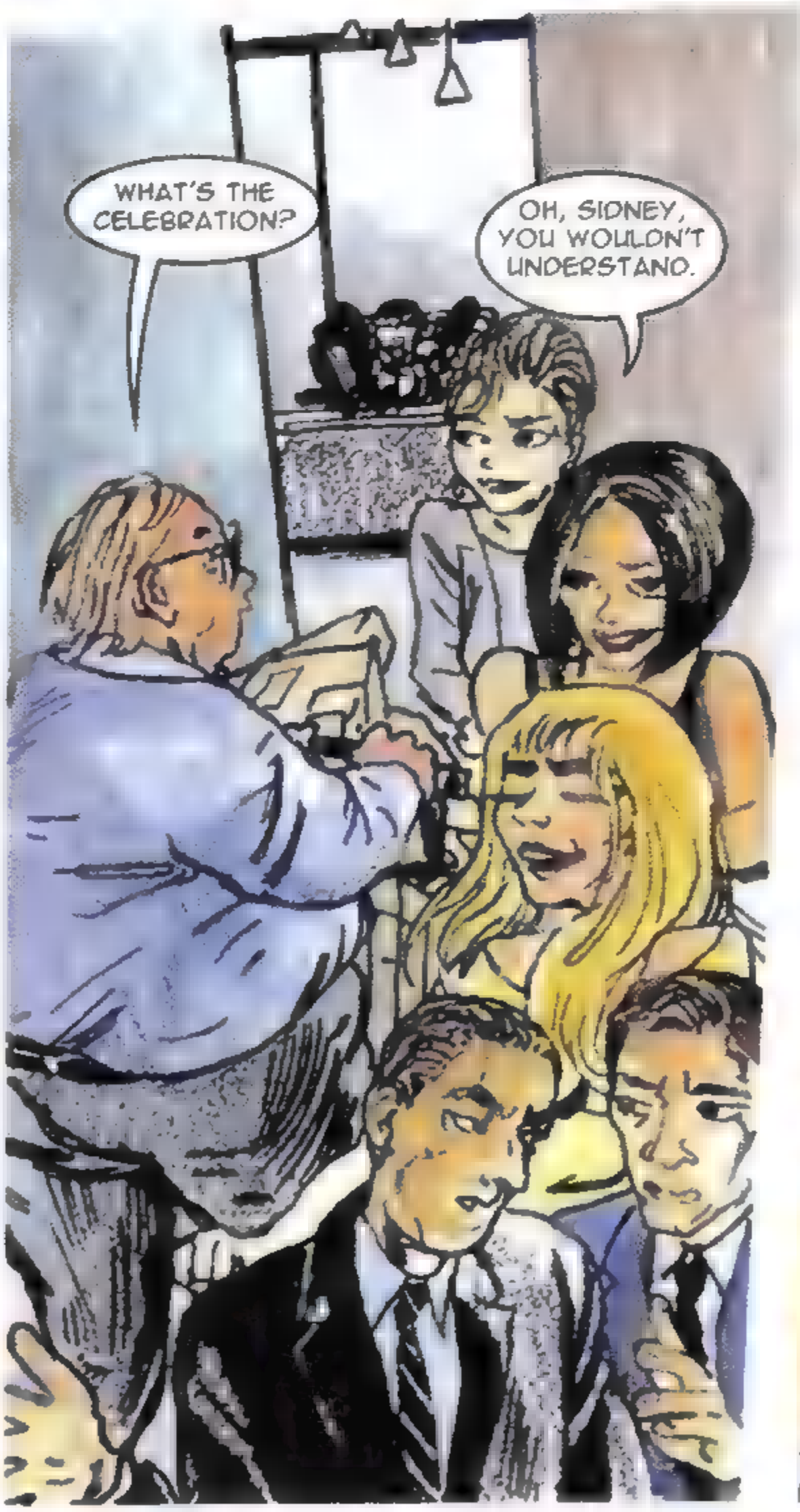
FOLKS ARE ALWAYS SCHEMIN' TO HOLD OTHERS DOWN! LET ME TELL YOU, EVEN THE CRYPT-KEEPER AND THE VAULT-KEEPER ARE PART OF A *GHOUL-OLD BOYS CLUB* THAT LOVES KEEPING A GOOD WOMAN DOWN! AFTER ALL, THEY'VE GOT *CRYPTS* AND *VAULTS* TO KEEP – WHAT DO I HAVE?!

I NEED TO WHIP UP A BATCH OF OL' DOC SCOTTSDALE'S SPECIAL POTION! BUT I'LL NEED TWO SPECIAL INGREDIENTS!

BUT *POWER-HUNGRY PREDATORS* DON'T JUST *PREY* UPON WOMEN! ANYONE THEY DEEM TO BE *WEAK* IS *FAIR GAME!* TAKE *STANLEY POTTS*, FOR EXAMPLE! ALL HE HAD WAS A SIMPLE DREAM, AND AN OPPORTUNISTIC CO-WORKER STOLE IT! IT'S ALL LOVINGLY LAID OUT IN...

VIRTUAL HOODOO

POP!
CONGRATU-LATIONS, BART. WHAT A GREAT IDEA!


WHAT'S THE CELEBRATION?
OH, SIDNEY, YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.

HE SOLD A FANTASTIC GAME IDEA FOR THE COMPANY.
IT'S CALLED MONSTER NEIGHBORHOOD.
WHAT!? THAT'S MY GAME.
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. YOU WORK IN THE MAIL ROOM. HE'S THE GENIUS.

WELL, IF IT ISN'T OL' SIDNEY.

YOU SOLD MONSTER NEIGHBORHOOD. THAT'S THE GAME I GAVE YOU.

NO.

THAT'S THE TITLE YOU GAVE ME.

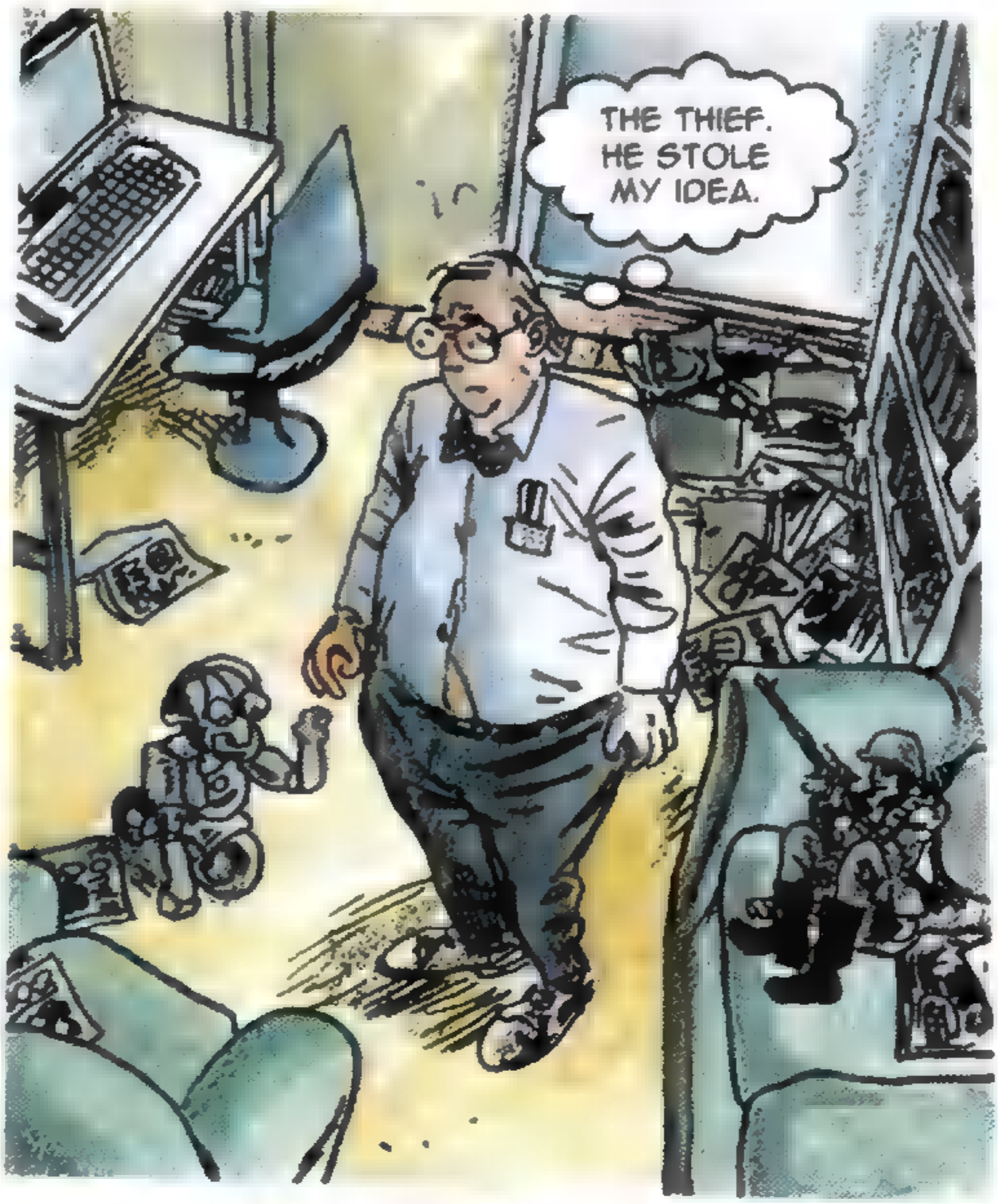
I'VE REVVED IT UP, SIDNEY. I'VE GIVEN IT A NICE PACKAGE AND A PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN.

BUT I INVENTED THE GAME.

COMING UP WITH A GAME'S NOTHING, POPS. IT'S SELLING THE GAME.

THAT'S WHERE THE WORK AND THE BRAINS ARE.

BUT IT'S MY GAME.


THE THIEF. HE STOLE MY IDEA.

HE DRINKS CHAMPAGNE, AND I DRINK MILK...THAT SMELLS.
WHY I'LL... I'LL...

I'LL DO NOTHING.... I NEVER DO ANYTHING.
I ALWAYS TAKE IT.

IN GRADE SCHOOL. HIGH SCHOOL. COLLEGE. ON THE JOB.
I ALWAYS TAKE IT.

ALL THAT WORK FOR NOTHING!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? THIS IS A RARE BOOK...WHAT'S THIS?

Vendetta Spell
WHO COULD THAT BE?
KNOCK NOCK

RENT, GRAMPS. YOU REMEMBER WHAT THAT IS. YOU'RE A MONTH LATE.
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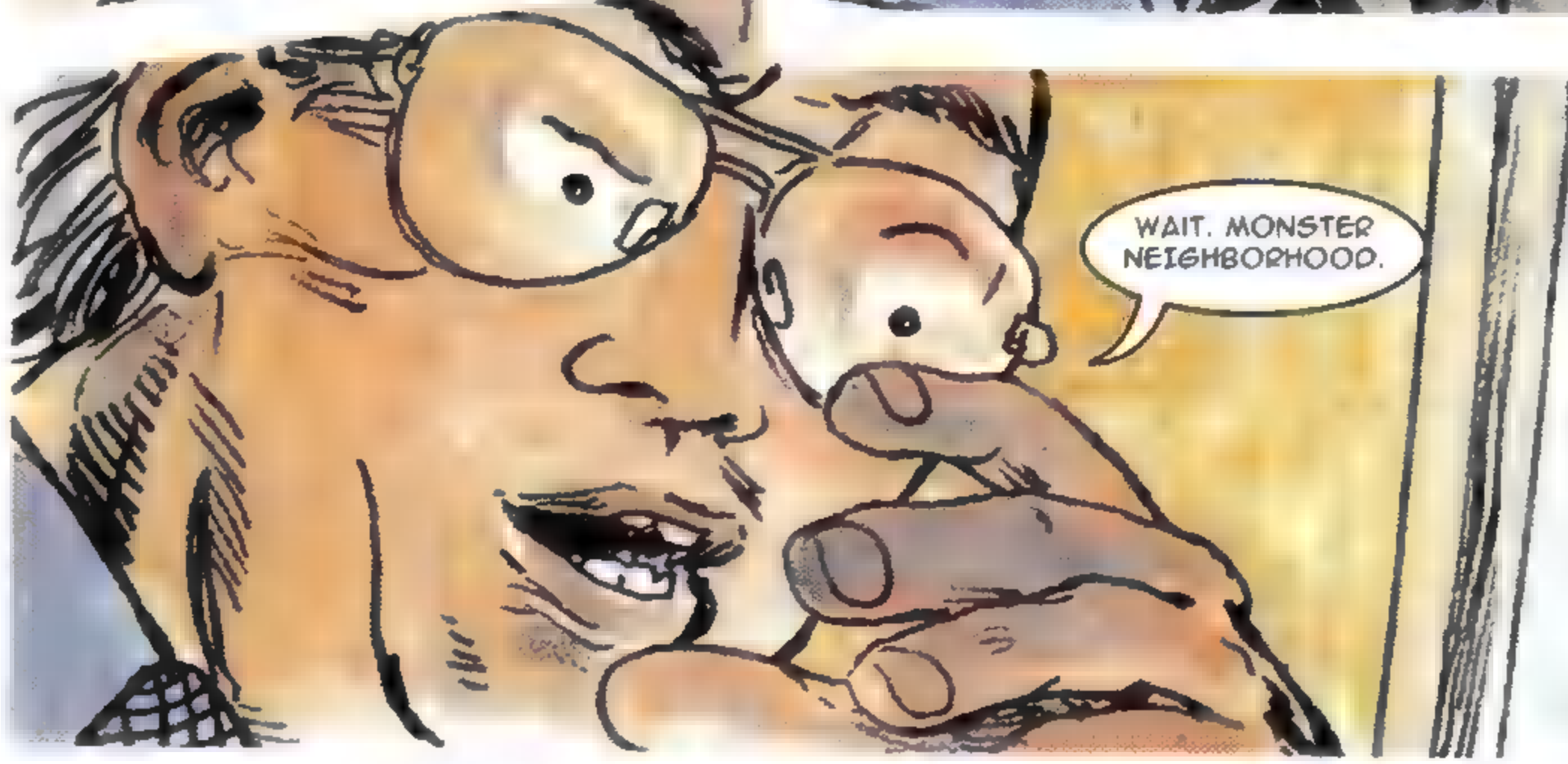
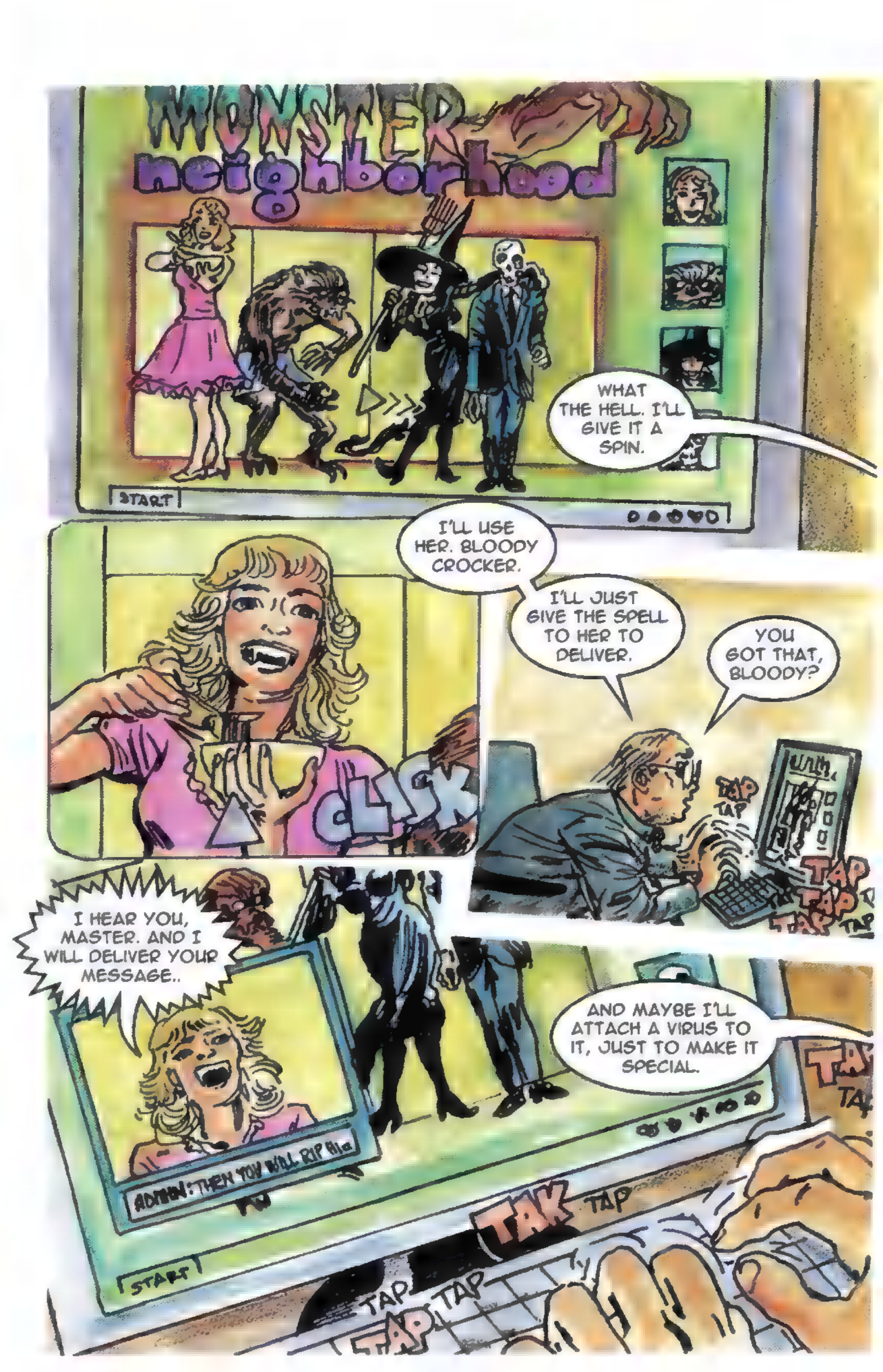
YES, SIR. I'VE HAD SOME PROBLEMS...

THAT AIN'T MY PROBLEM, SPORT. YOU HAVE THE RENT TOMORROW, WALK IT DOWN THE HALL TO MY HUMBLE ABODE, OR COLLECT SOME CARD-BOARD BOXES TO PUT THIS JUNK IN, AND BE GONE.

IF ONLY THIS WAS REAL...
HUH, SAYS THE SPELL HAS TO BE DONE BY MAIL...

...AND THAT YOU CURSE YOUR TARGET...
...WITH THE POX, OR A MONSTER, OR DEMON.
BUT WHERE WOULD I FIND SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

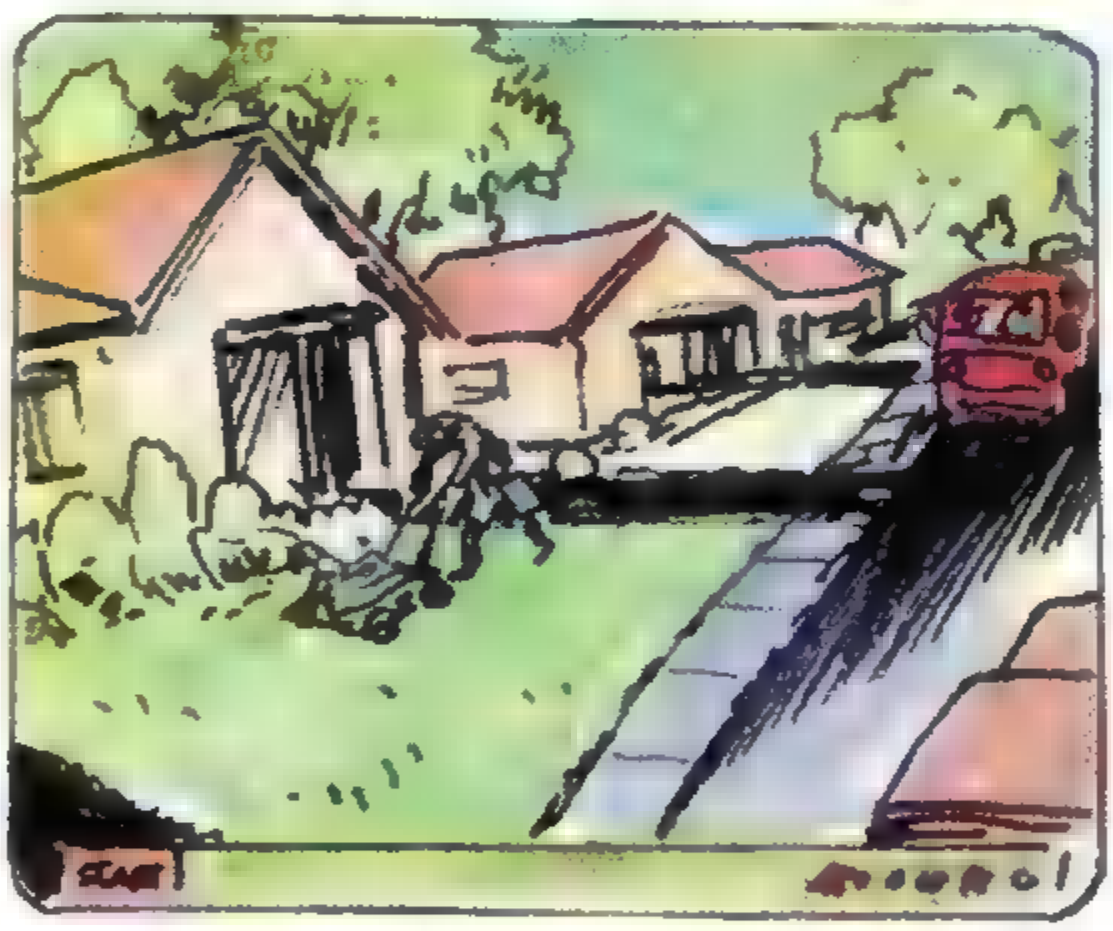

WAIT. MONSTER NEIGHBORHOOD.


MONSTER neighborhood
START
WHAT THE HELL. I'LL GIVE IT A SPIN.
I'LL USE HER. BLOODY CROCKER.
I'LL JUST GIVE THE SPELL TO HER TO DELIVER.
YOU GOT THAT, BLOODY?
CLICK
TAP TAP
TAP TAP TAP
I HEAR YOU, MASTER. AND I WILL DELIVER YOUR MESSAGE..
AND MAYBE I'LL ATTACH A VIRUS TO IT, JUST TO MAKE IT SPECIAL.
ADMIN: THEN YOU WILL RIP ME
START
TAP
TAK
TAP
TAP
TAP

WHERE'S DAD?
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THAT?
SOUNDS LIKE A TRAIN WRECK.
OH, MY GOODNESS, IT'S THE LANDLORD.
SOMEONE BIT HIM...
AND MUST HAVE BEAT HIM WITH THAT BOWL AND SPOON. I'LL CALL THE POLICE.

IT WORKS.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE SPELL MADE IT REAL. I HAVE MY OWN PERSONAL ARMY.
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAK



THEY'RE JUST LIKE I INVENTED THEM.

TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAK

A NEIGHBORHOOD OF MONSTERS.
TAP

THIS IS GREAT. LET THAT LITTLE MILQUETOAST DO ALL THE WORK, AND I CASH THE CHECK.

TECHNOLOGY IS GREAT. I CAN HOME IN ON BART'S HOUSE. I CAN USE AERIAL TECHNOLOGY. I CAN CUT AND PASTE.
TAP
TAP TAP
TAP

SOON AS A I CASH THIS CHECK I'M GOING TO BUY ME A BETTER SPORTS CAR, AND A BLONDE TO GO WITH IT.

AND WITH MY MAGIC SPELL, I CAN MOVE HIM TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

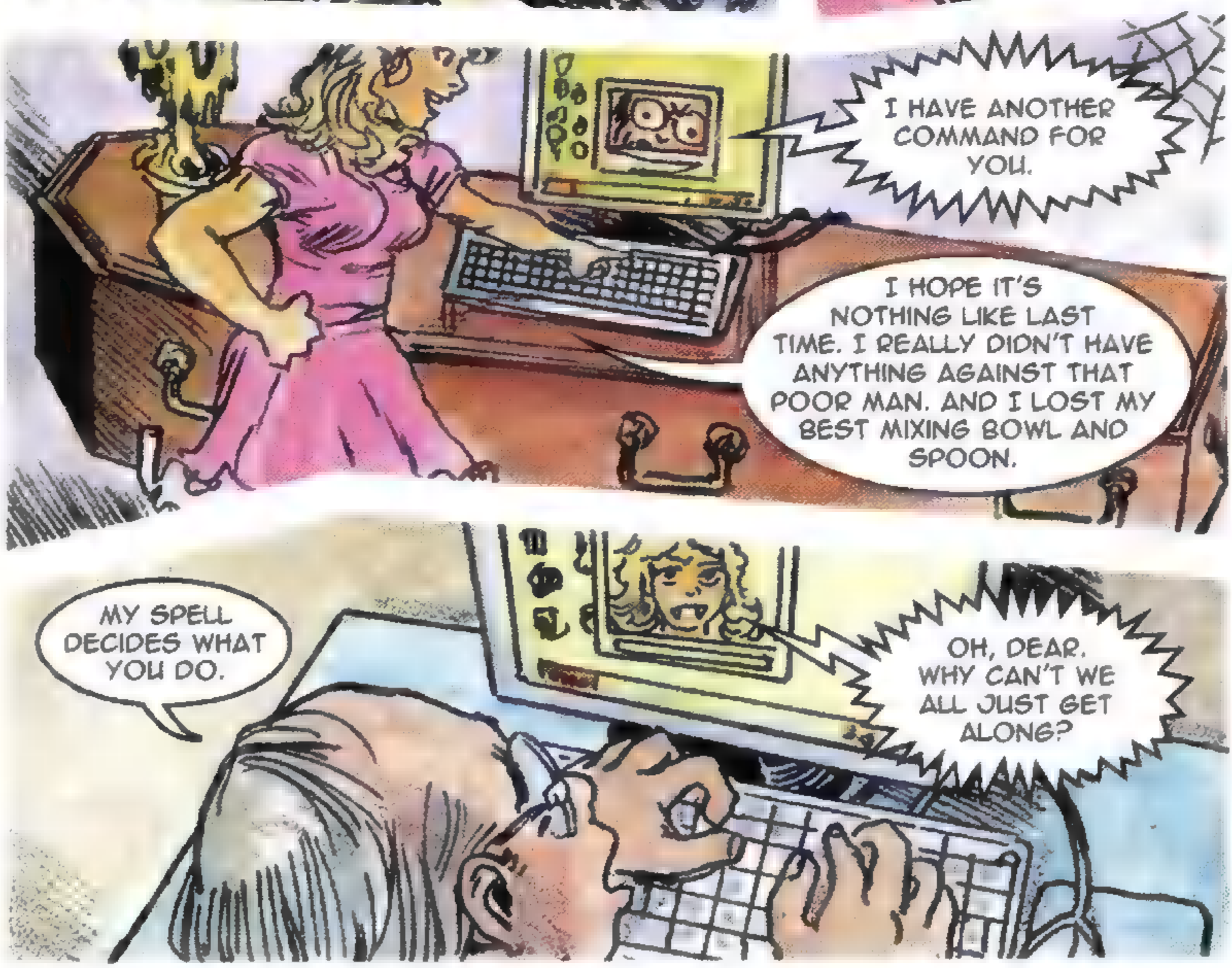
WHAT THE HECK?

HOW CAN IT BE DARK?
IT'S ONLY THREE-THIRTY IN THE AFTER-NOON.

NO! IT CAN'T BE.

THESE HAVE FRESH BLOOD IN THEM. AND RAISINS.
YUM!

PING
I'VE GOT MAIL.


I HAVE ANOTHER COMMAND FOR YOU.
I HOPE IT'S NOTHING LIKE LAST TIME. I REALLY DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING AGAINST THAT POOR MAN. AND I LOST MY BEST MIXING BOWL AND SPOON.
MY SPELL DECIDES WHAT YOU DO.
OH, DEAR. WHY CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

HELLO, IN THERE. WELCOMING COMMITTEE.
KNOCK KNOCK

SIDNEY WANTS HIS MONEY.
WAM

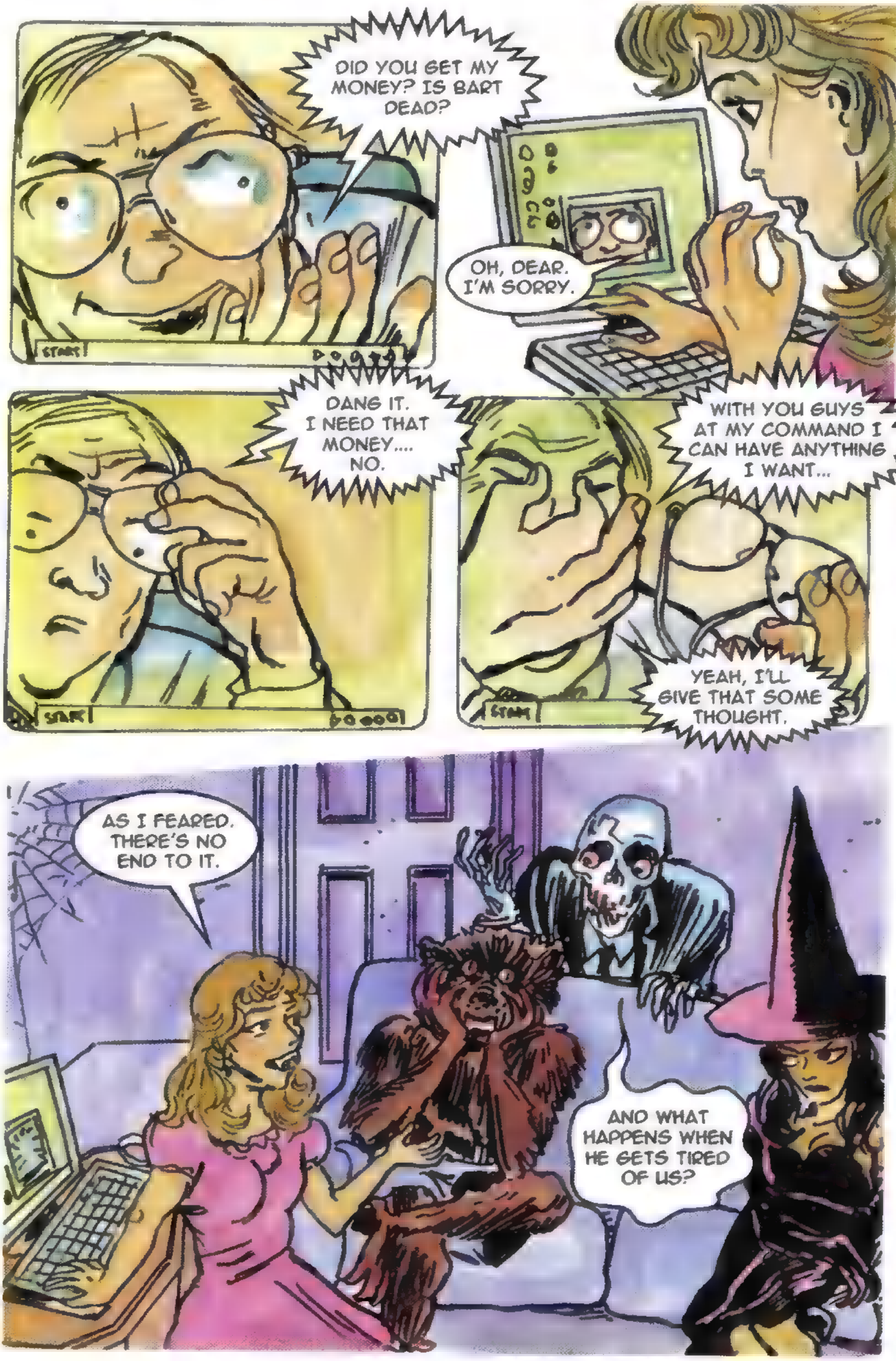
SIDNEY! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.
I'M NOT GIVING HIM ANYTHING, THAT WORM. THE MONEY'S IN THE BANK, AND IT STAYS IN THE BANK.

IF HE CAN'T HAVE HIS MONEY, HE'LL HAVE YOU.

WACK

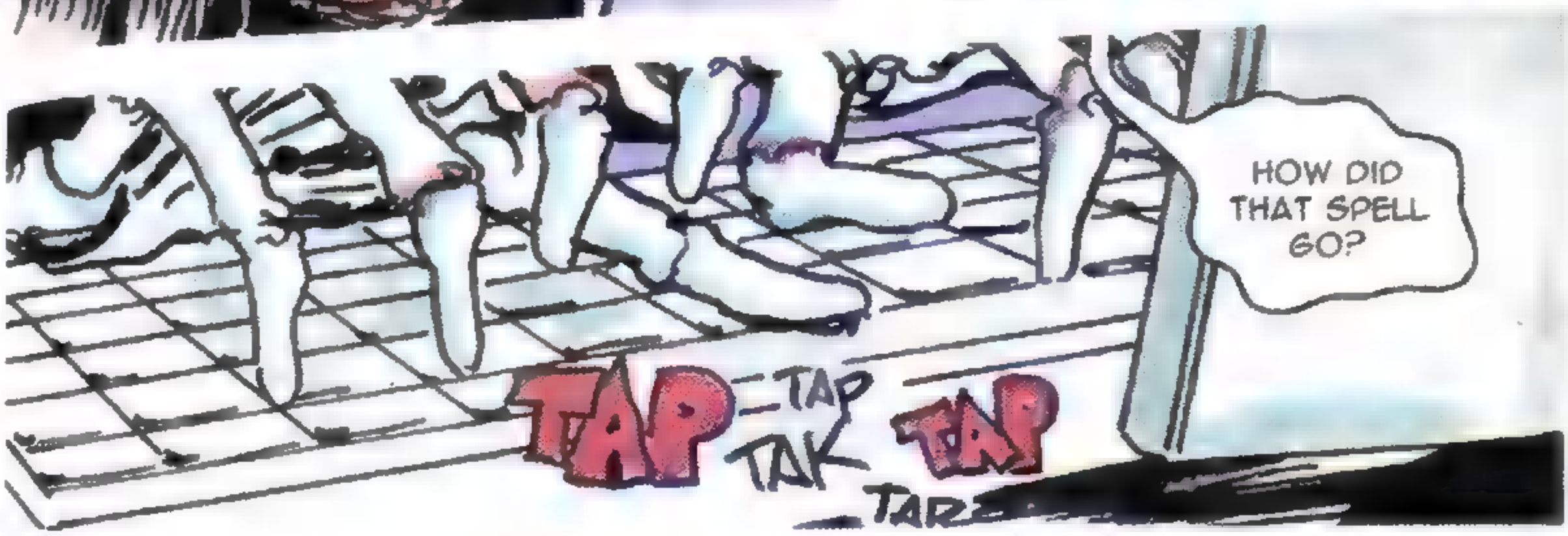
THIS IS GOING TO COST YOU AN ARM AND A LEG.

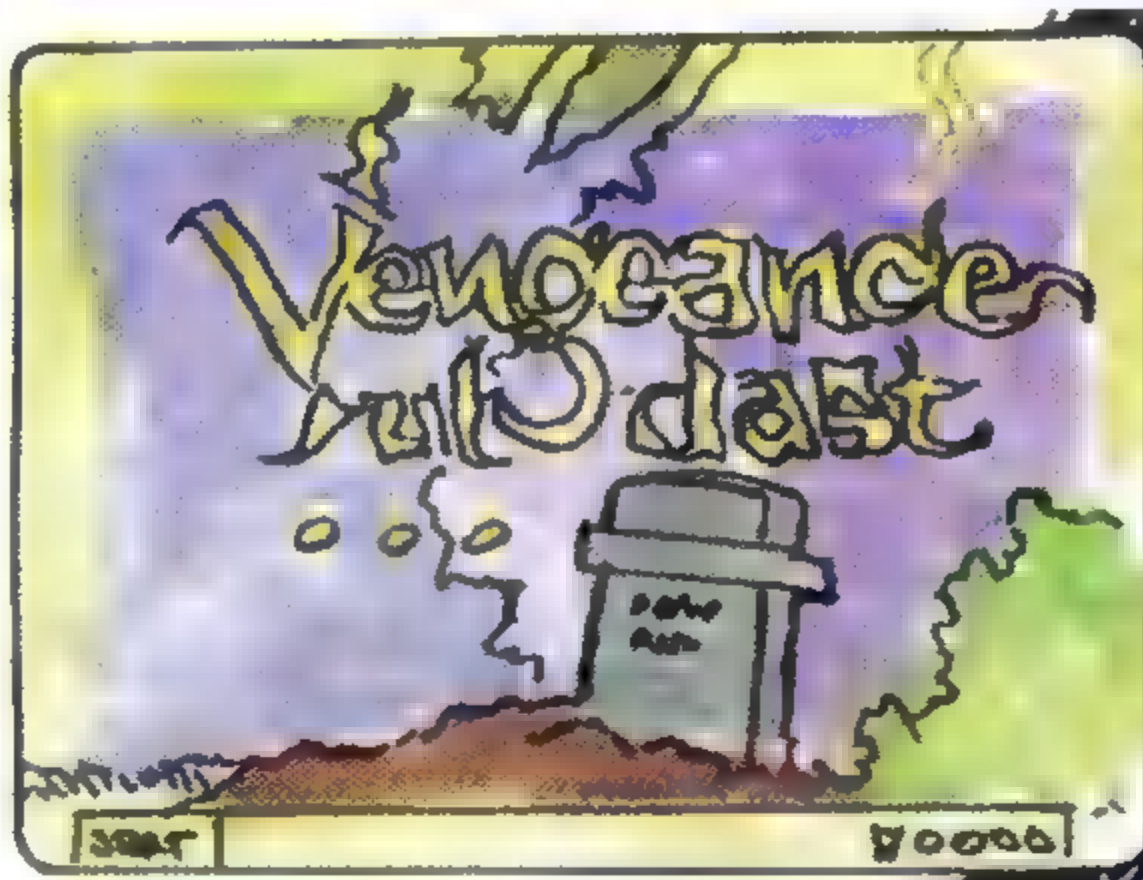
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE TOO DEEP.
COVER HIM UP, WOLFIE.
CLUMP!
I HOPE THAT'S ALL SIDNEY EXPECTS FOR AWHILE.
YES, IT'S ALL SO...UGLY.
YEAH, AND I BROKE A NAIL.
RING

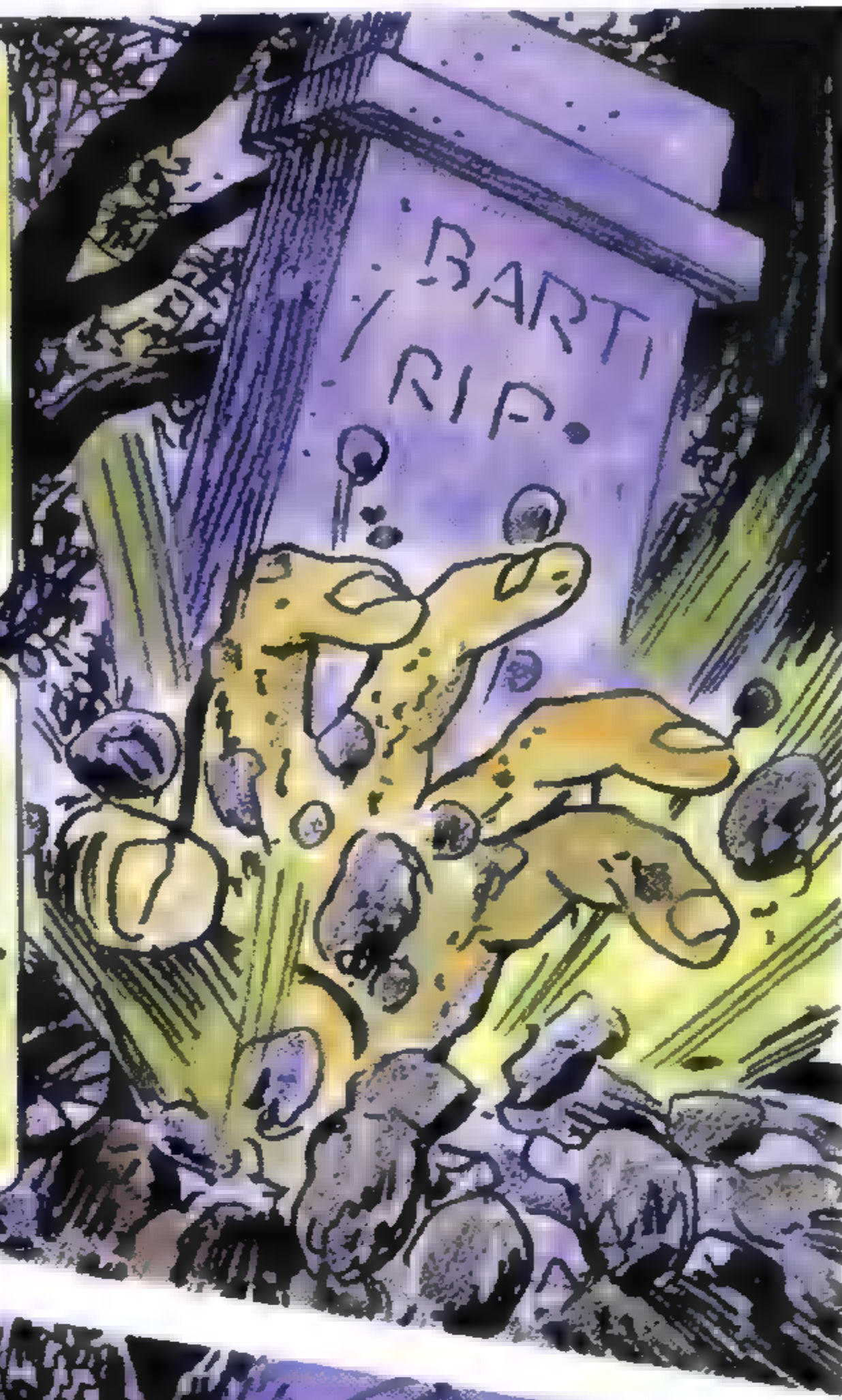

DID YOU GET MY MONEY? IS BART DEAD?
OH, DEAR. I'M SORRY.
DANG IT. I NEED THAT MONEY.... NO.
WITH YOU GUYS AT MY COMMAND I CAN HAVE ANYTHING I WANT...
YEAH, I'LL GIVE THAT SOME THOUGHT.
AS I FEARED. THERE'S NO END TO IT.
AND WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HE GETS TIRED OF US?

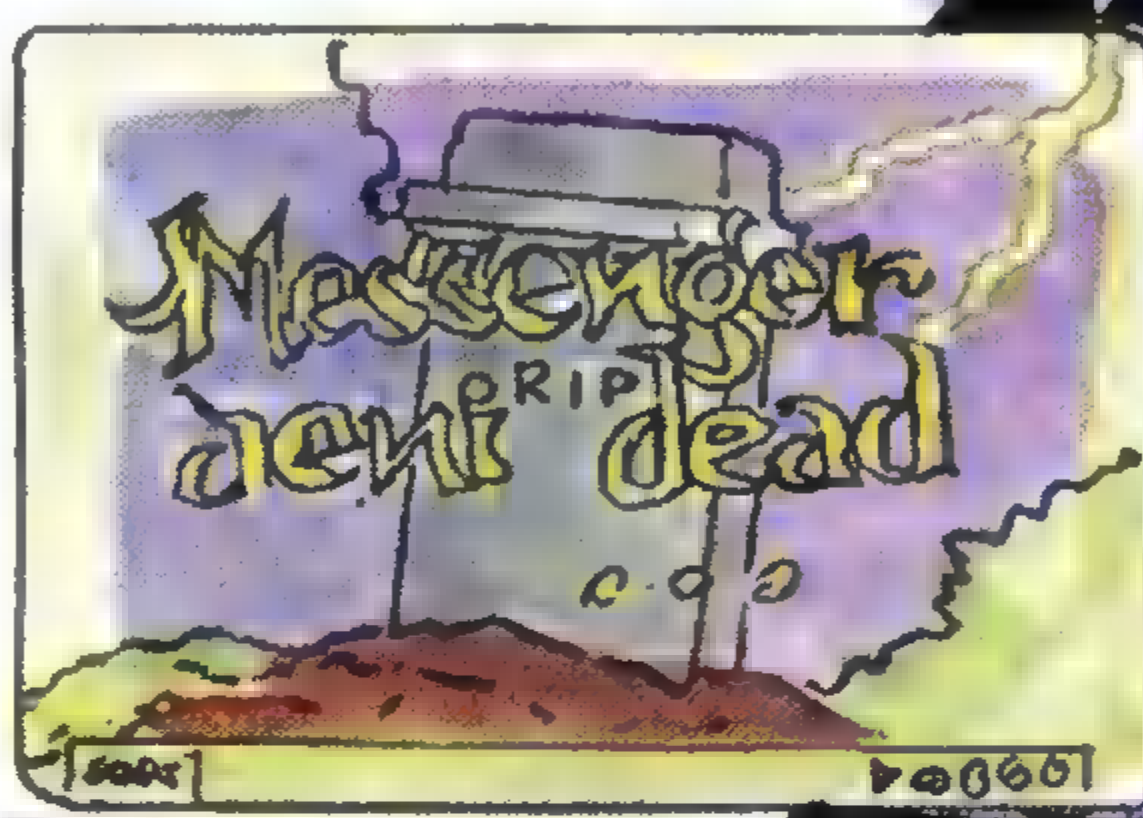
I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO FIX THINGS.

NOT US.

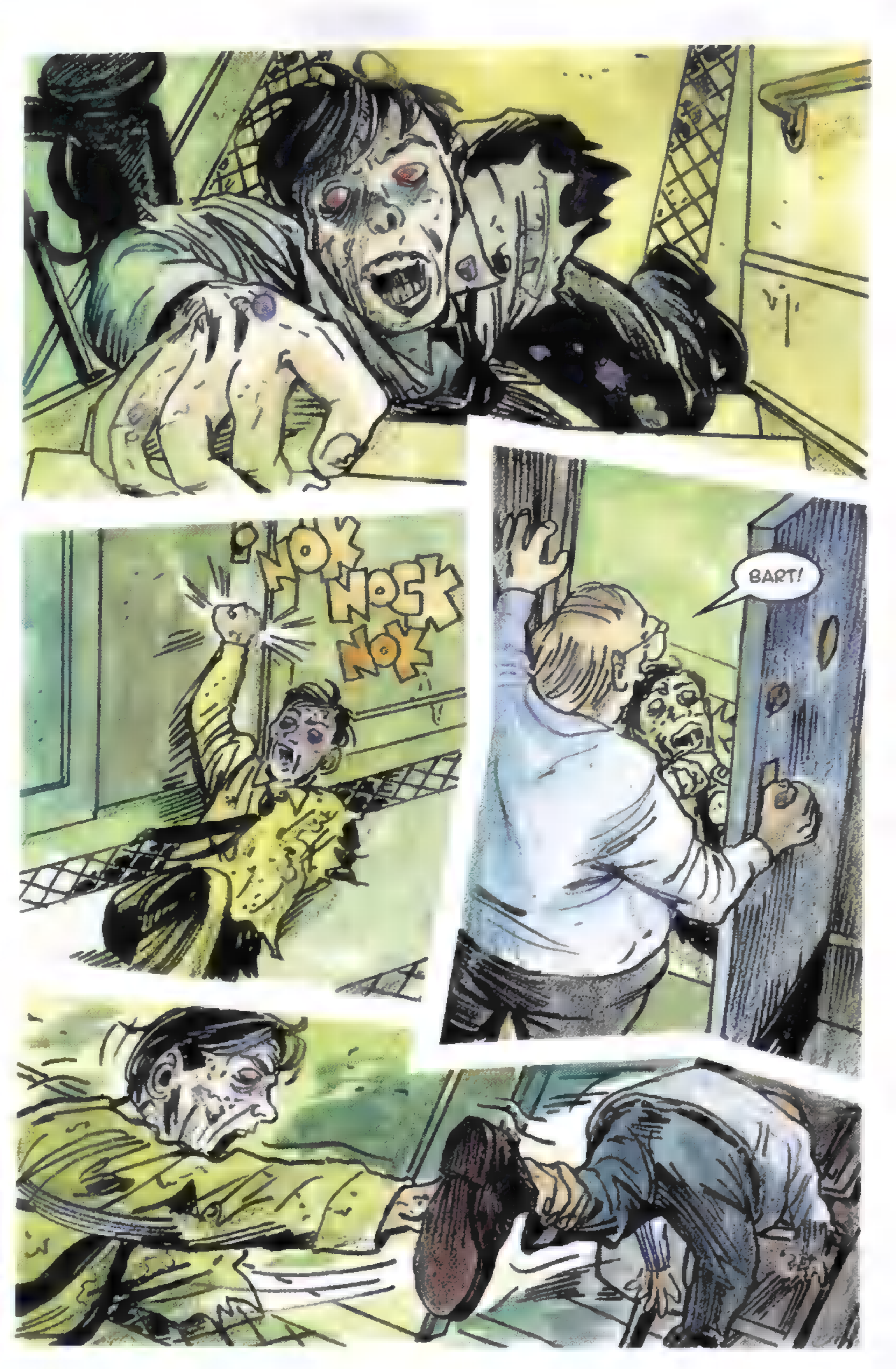

HOW DID THAT SPELL GO?
TAP
TAP
TAK
TAP
TAP


Vengeance
will be last

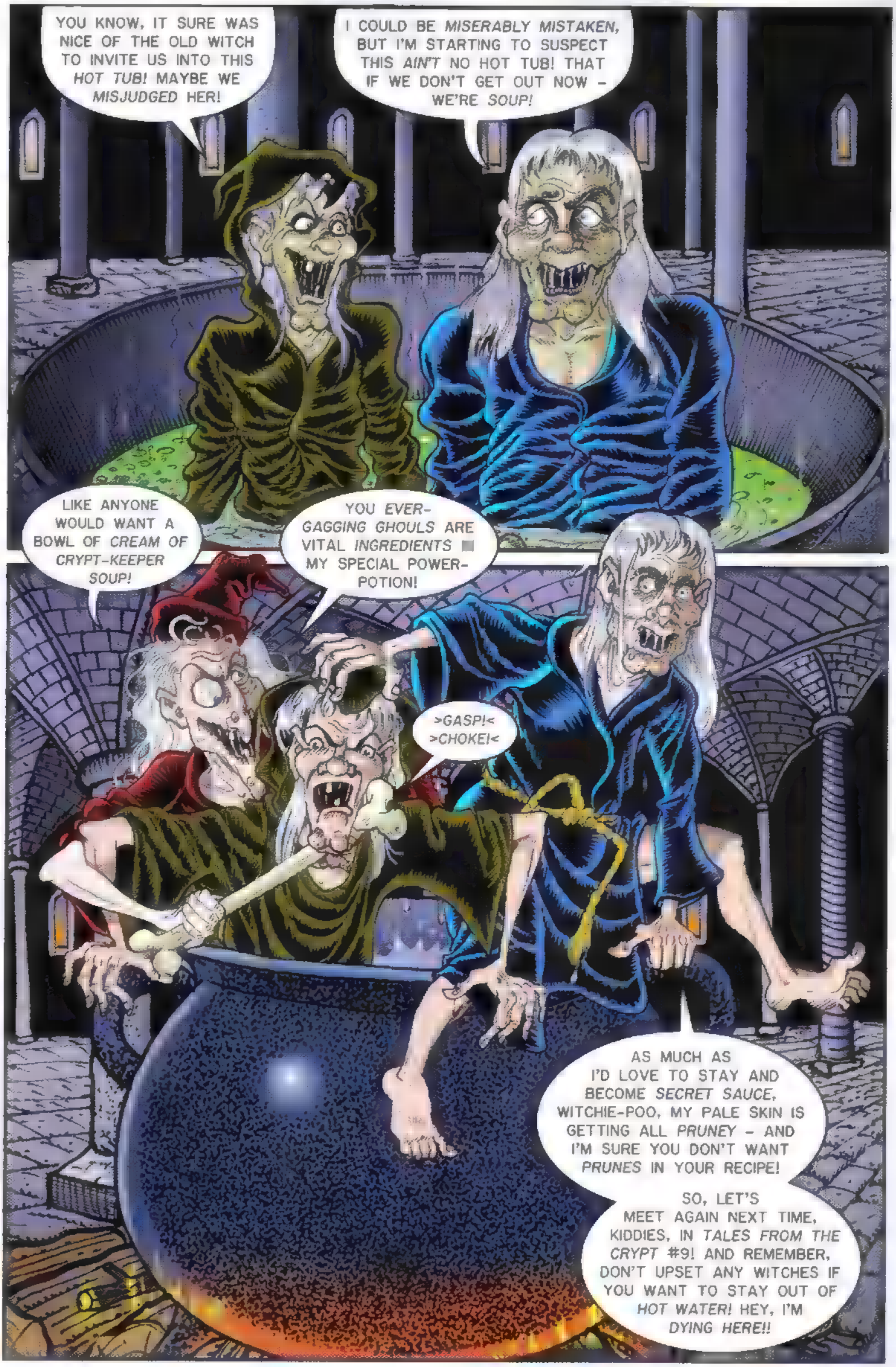

BART
RIP.

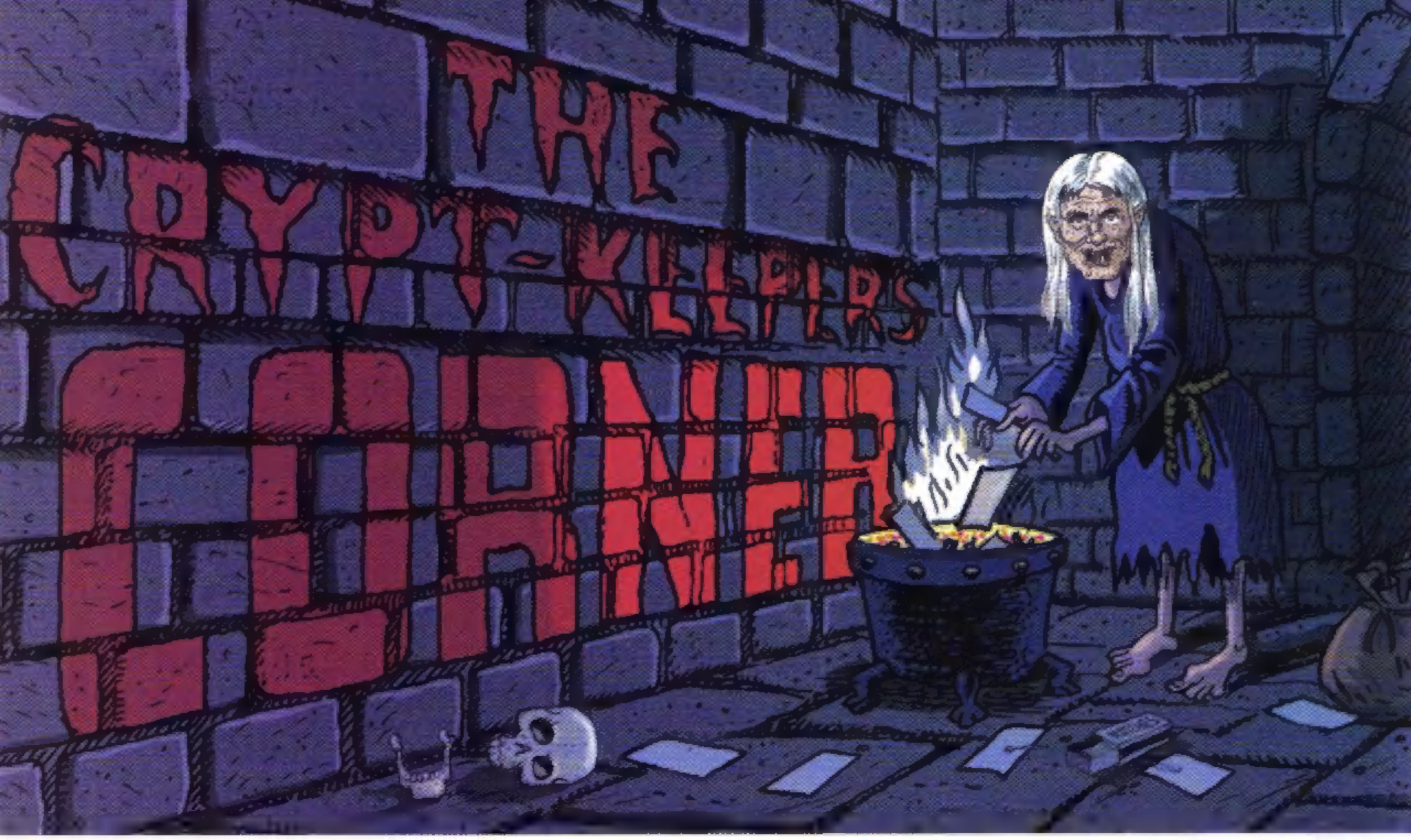

Messenger
RIP
now dead

NOW. CUT
AND PASTE
AND--
TAP
TAP
TAP


NOCK NOCK NOCK
BART!

IT'S SUCH A NICE NEIGHBORHOOD...
RRRRRR
NOW THAT SIDNEY'S GONE.


YOU KNOW, IT SURE WAS NICE OF THE OLD WITCH TO INVITE US INTO THIS *HOT TUB!* MAYBE WE *MISJUDGED* HER!
I COULD BE *MISERABLY MISTAKEN,* BUT I'M STARTING TO SUSPECT THIS *AIN'T* NO HOT TUB! THAT IF WE DON'T GET OUT NOW – WE'RE *SOUP!*
LIKE ANYONE WOULD WANT A BOWL OF *CREAM OF CRYPT-KEEPER SOUP!*
YOU *EVER-GAGGING GHOULS* ARE VITAL *INGREDIENTS* ■ MY SPECIAL POWER-POTION!
>GASP!< >CHOKE!<
AS MUCH AS I'D LOVE TO STAY AND BECOME *SECRET SAUCE,* WITCHIE-POO, MY PALE SKIN IS GETTING ALL *PRUNEY* – AND I'M SURE YOU DON'T WANT *PRUNES* IN YOUR RECIPE!
SO, LET'S MEET AGAIN NEXT TIME, KIDDIES, IN *TALES FROM THE CRYPT* #9! AND REMEMBER, DON'T UPSET ANY WITCHES IF YOU WANT TO STAY OUT OF *HOT WATER!* HEY, I'M *DYING HERE!!*




*Gruesome greetings, my fellow Americans! It's me, your non-political Crypt-Keeper, with a somewhat SHRUNKEN SELECTION of FEARLESS FEEDBACK from our CREEPY CONSTITUENTS. Seems like our usually tight-lipped editorial types are eager to spout off on a topic we're super-sensitive about around these parts. Ironic, isn't it? In order for them to talk about censorship, we have to silence a few of our FEINDISH fans from expressing their un-DYING admiration for their favorite HORROR comicbook!*

*But while the POWERS-THAT-BE around here may be a benevolent dictatorship, we've always ran this letters column as a true DEMON-ocracy, er, I mean, democracy, letting you the rotten readers VOTE every issue for your favorite stories. It was a close race this time around with "Ignoble Rot" by writer Fred Van Lente and artist Mort Todd just squeaking past "Moonlight Sonata" by writers Joe and John Lansdale and artist Chris Noeth. Not much of a surprise really, as ZOMBIES are hotter than ever these days.*

*I'd normally tell you all about our fifth frightful collection of TALES FROM THE CRYPT stories published in paperback and hardcover by Papercutz, but that'll just have to wait till next time. Or you can simply check out the ad on our back cover. But if we're going to squeeze any mail in, we better do so now…*

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I was recently at my local mall, and in the center plaza was a temporary comic vendor. He had all kinds of comic collectibles. I walked straight up to him and asked him for the EC comics. He pulled down a stack of EC originals. It was amazing. He even had THE CRYPT OF TERROR issue two. I told him I wanted to buy them so bad but I didn't have the money. He pointed me to a box of horror comics with some 1990 reprints. I snatched the only two CRYPTS he had. Even though the new ones are nothing like them, I still love them. I would be so happy if you could revive THE HAUNT OF FEAR and THE VAULT OF HORROR. (Maybe even make them for a more mature audience…?) Or maybe you could reprint originals. Even if you don't, I'm still going to keep buying TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Congratulations and thank you for reviving a series I grew up on.

Sincerely,
Johnny Bailey

*Tell me, Johnny, did the Vault-Keeper or the The Old Witch put you up to this? Those two will stoop to any level to get their mags back! And in case you didn't know, all of the original EC comics are being reprinted as beautiful big full-color hardcover books by the geeks over at Gemstone Publishing. You can buy the first few years of TALES FROM THE CRYPT (as well as THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE VAULT OF HORROR, and many more) for a mere $49.95 per volume – a lot cheaper than trying to get the original back issues!*

Keep those emails and letters coming – we get so lonely here in the Crypt of Terror! Send letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your comments to the Old Editor at:

**salicrup@papercutz.com**

And be sure to visit **papercutz.com** for the latest TALES FROM THE CRYPT news!

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# A SPECIAL EDITORIAL

## BY CATHY GAINES MIFSUD

Before we begin, we need to make something very clear. TALES FROM THE CRYPT is not endorsing any political candidates or parties. We respect our readers' intelligence, and for those of you old enough to vote, we encourage you to do so for the candidates of your choice.

Nor are we attacking any candidates. This issue's alternate cover, featuring Gov. Sarah Palin, is our version of a political cartoon. It's simply expressing our reaction whenever we hear anything about book banning -- it's truly frightening to us. Also, and this is very important, it's very unclear whether those early reports about Sarah Palin, looking into banning books from a library back when she was the mayor of Wasilla, Alaska, are true or not. We, of course, certainly hope that they're indeed untrue.

Why is book banning frightening to us? Surely, we can't possibly object to anyone keeping objectionable material out of the hands of impressionable children. Well...

You see, from 1950 to 1956 my father, William M. Gaines, published the original TALES FROM THE CRYPT comicbooks, as well as the rest of the entire EC line of comics, which included THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE VAULT OF HORROR, WEIRD SCIENCE, SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES, TWO-FISTED TALES, WEIRD FANTASY, WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, CRIME SUSPENSTORIES, and one called MAD. Dad hired the very best writers, artists, and editors in the field, and even now, over 50 years later, those comics are still considered to be shining examples of some of the best comics ever created.

Unfortunately, during the height of the success of the EC horror titles, there was a movement to ban these comics, based on the misguided notion that they were somehow turning children into juvenile delinquents. Just like some politicians today try to blame video games and rap music for all sorts of social ills and for being a negative influence, back then EC comics were the target.There were newspaper and magazine articles, investigations, and finally, a Comics Code was created, a code that meant the end of almost the entire EC line of comics. Only MAD, which was turned into a magazine, managed to survive.

Now, if you actually look at and read those old EC comics, the only thing that might actually shock you is how incredibly tame they are by today's standards. Take a look at the hardcover collections of TALES FROM THE CRYPT published by Gemstone, and look closely at those stories, and you'll see that you'll be hard-pressed to find a single drop of blood. Sure, the stories were scary -- that's what they were intended to be. But they were scary in the same way that classic fairy tales are scary, or even stories from the Bible. Usually the stories were about someone who did something wrong, and how their victims were somehow avenged.

Now, does that mean we believe that every book ever published should be available to any reader of any age? Of course not! Certainly every bookstore and library has the responsibility to make sure no unsuitable material ever winds up in the hands of children. And certainly, every bookseller has the right to decide to sell or not sell whatever they choose. The challenge is always determining exactly what is and isn't suitable for children.

When we decided to relaunch TALES FROM THE CRYPT with Papercutz, there were fans of the original comic that were surprised that we chose a publisher known for their all-ages graphic novels. Those fans wanted a new TALES FROM THE CRYPT series that would push the boundaries of modern horror, going places no TALES FROM THE CRYPT comic had ever gone before. Now, there's certainly nothing wrong with that, but we decided to go with Papercutz because we wanted TALES FROM THE CRYPT to be what the original comic was always meant to be, a scary comic for all-ages, with the very best writing and artwork possible. So, here we are, over fifty years after the original TALES FROM THE CRYPT comic was launched, and we're back trying to create a comic that we hope folks fifty years from now will still be talking about.

We certainly understand the desire to protect children from unsuitable material, but we don't believe that banning books is the answer. As the situation exists today, both librarians and booksellers act very responsibly to assure that children are not exposed to anything objectionable. Protecting children, is usually the excuse given when another agenda may be at work. As far as we can tell, teachers, parents, librarians, and booksellers are doing a great job of making sure children are indeed protected. What usually seems to be behind banning books is an attempt to repress ideas that may offer alternative political views. This is not only un-American -- blatantly violating the very concept of free speech -- but it is assuming that people are unable to come to their own informed conclusions about controversial subjects. And how could they, if only one side of a debate is presented, while literature expressing opposing views are suppressed? Banning books represents a lack of faith in the intelligence of our fellow citizens to think for themselves.

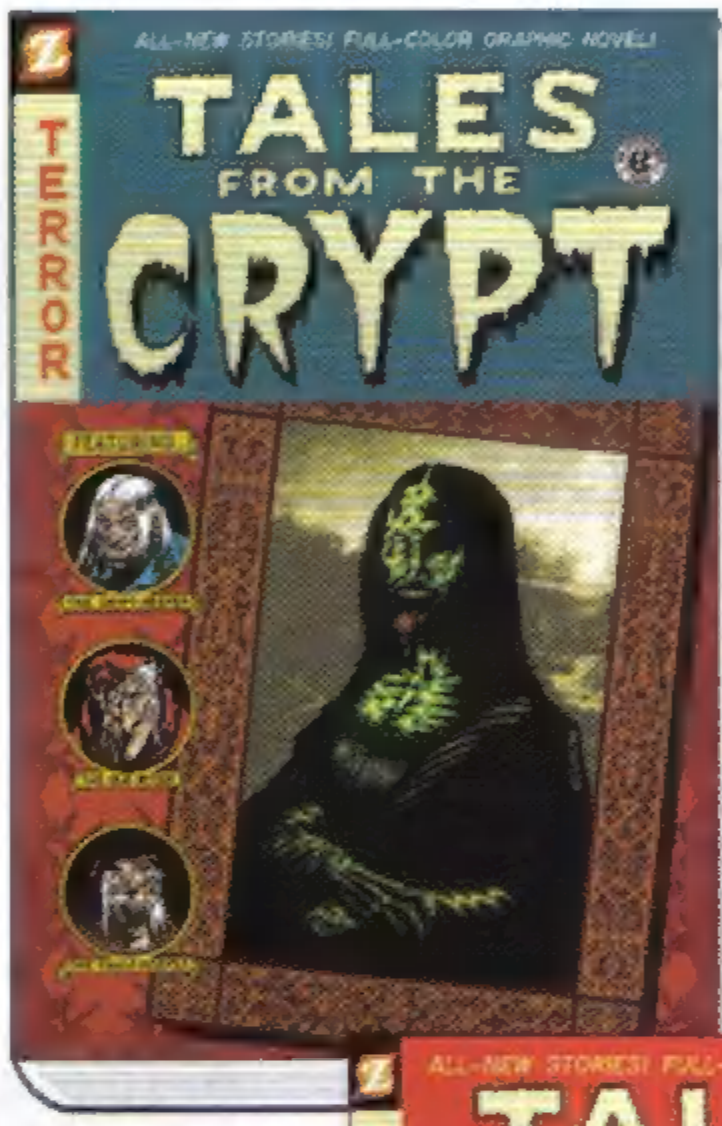
In 1990, the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, was incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization to fight censorship and defend the first amendment rights of comic book professionals throughout the United States. If you support free speech and love comicbooks, may we suggest you consider joining this noble organization? For full details, go to www.cbldf.org. I only wish they were around when my father could've used their help.

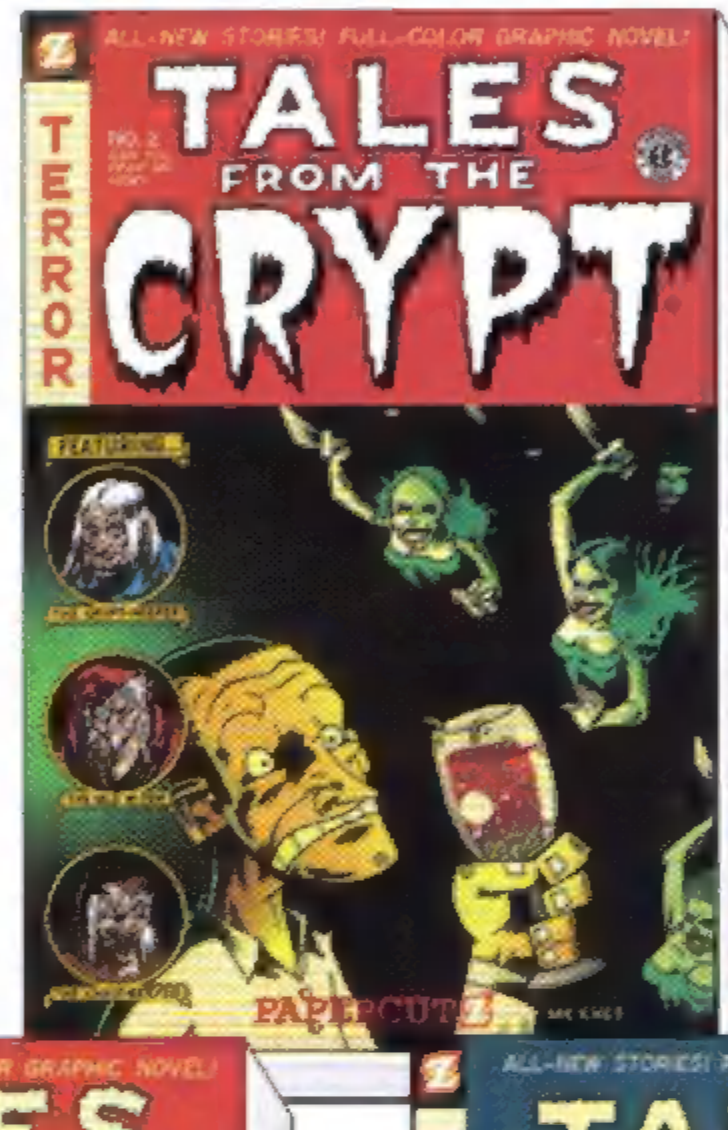
With all that said, we still like to believe that we're living in a world that recognizes that children love a good scary story, and that if it's told responsibly with good taste, it sparks their imaginations and they become the next generation of such amazing creators as George Lucas, Stephen Speilberg, Stephen King, and R.L. Stine -- all former EC comics readers.

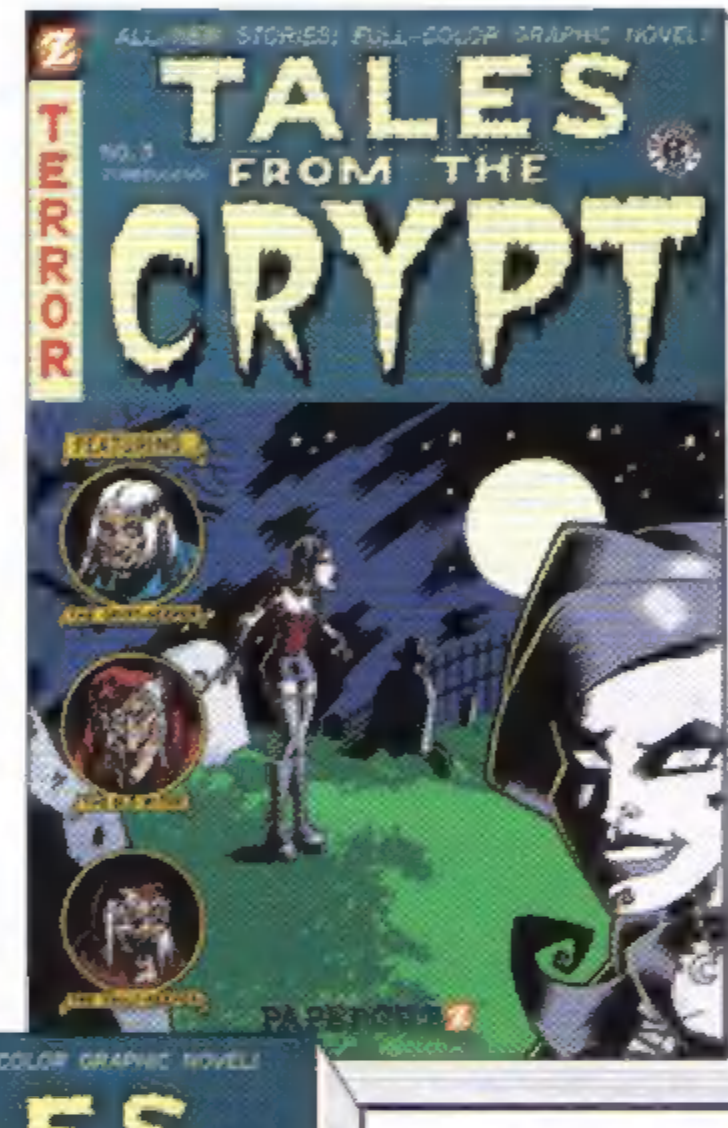
*Thank You,*
*Cathy Gaines Mifsud*
*President William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.*

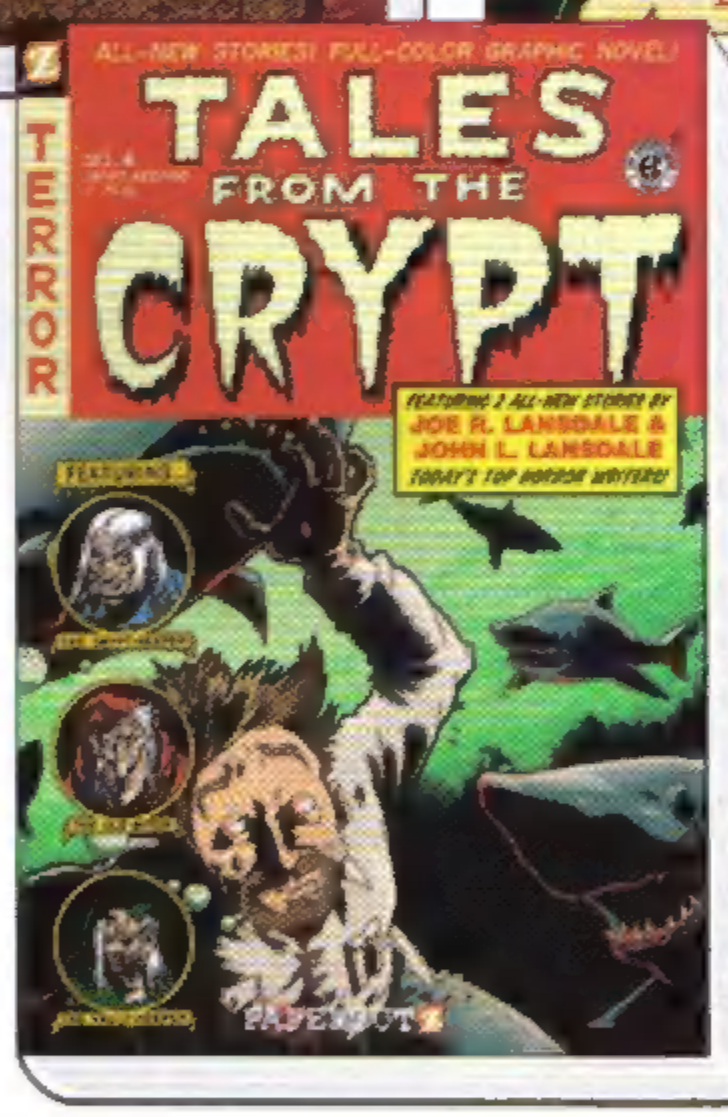
# E.C. FANS!

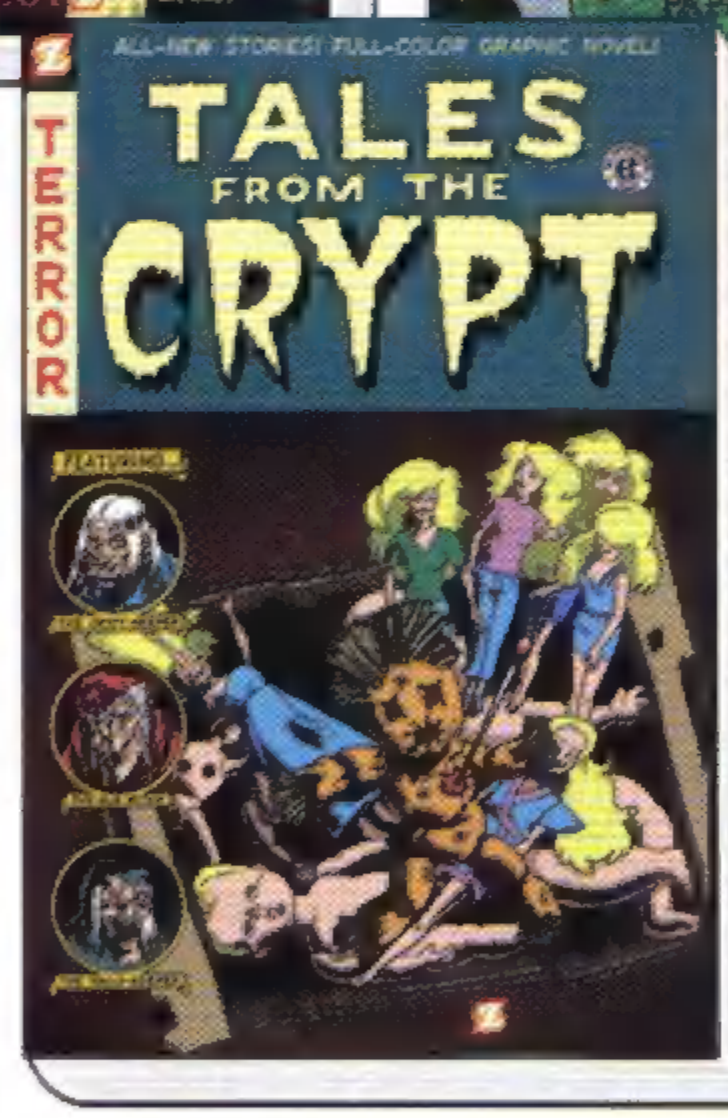
YOU'VE WRITTEN!
YOU'VE E-MAILED!
YOU'VE PHONED!
YOU'VE THREATENED US!
**YOU'VE DEMANDED!**
(BUT WE'RE COMING OUT WITH THESE COLLECTIONS ANYWAY!)



COLLECTING STORIES BY BILGREY, CABRAL, MR.EXES, GNIEWEK, HUDSON, KAPLAN, KLEID, LANSDALE, LOBDELL, MANNION, MARTINEZ, McGREGOR, MURASE, NOETH, PETRUCHA, ROMBERGER, SIMMONS, SMITH 3, TODD, VELILLA and VOLLMAR!

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WildBlueZero